

“TRAGEDY AND GLORY” IN THE “UNFORTUNATE ERA”: UNDERSTANDING THE
CREOLIZATION OF SANTO DOMINGO THROUGH THE BOCA NIGUA REVOLT

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Abstract

This thesis examines a slave revolt that occurred at the Boca Nigua sugar plantation in Santo Domingo (today the Dominican Republic) during the fall of 1796. The Spanish colony's population at the time were coming to terms with revolution in St. Domingue (the French territory it shared an island with) and Santo Domingo's cession to France in 1795. I argue the slave rebels who initiated the revolt at Boca Nigua and the colonial officials responsible for subduing it were influenced by creolization. Conceptually, the process involves people from divergent geographic origins arriving to the Caribbean through mass migration, and forging local cultures through the economic and political arrangements found in the colonial world. To illustrate how the peoples of Santo Domingo creolized in the tumultuous 1790s, I utilize microhistory—a theoretical framework that stresses the benefits of a micro scale, human agency, and analysis of big historical developments from a micro perspective. I show rebel slave leaders' decision to revolt stemmed from their creole designation and identity in the plantation's social hierarchy. The colonial authorities responsible for quelling the conflict and bringing the offenders to justice approached the situation with the intention of assuring local creole elites order would be maintained. These findings are situated within Dominican historiography as an effort to rethink the origins of the nation and its historic link to creolization.

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Dedication

As the intellectual wisdom of my committee members and the faculty I worked with was crucial for the completion of the research, it would have been unthinkable without the love, sacrifice, and patience of my family. I dedicate this work to Jack and George, my sons; my gracious wife, Samantha; my inspiring father, Terry; guardian angel, Debbie; and my courageous sister, Amanda.

Chapter 1: Introducing “Tragedy and Glory” in the “Unfortunate Era”

In late October 1796, black slaves at the Hacienda de Boca Nigua, considered the most efficiently-run sugar refinery in Santo Domingo (today the Dominican Republic) by contemporaries, took up arms against their white overseers.¹ Slave participants seized control of the hacienda but were soon confronted by Spanish troops sent by the colonial government to quell the uprising. Within six weeks, the rebel slaves were apprehended, sentenced and executed.² Colonial officials responsible for orchestrating the revolt’s suppression—the governor of Santo Domingo Joaquín García y Moreno and D. José Antonio de Vrizar, head of the Audiencia (imperial court)—dispatched reports to their superior, high-ranking Spanish statesman Manuel de Godoy, assuring him calm had been restored in short order.³ At first glance, the affair appears a minor event: slaves in Santo Domingo were far less numerous than in other West Indian colonies (such as Jamaica and St. Domingue [present-day Haiti]), and most slaves in the Spanish colony worked in cattle-ranching.⁴ Not surprisingly, the revolt at Boca Nigua is allotted little more than passing mention in Dominican history.⁵ However, when observed more closely, the Boca Nigua slave revolt affords a glimpse into an important juncture in the country’s past, when cultural, political and social identities were being contested and remade.

Creolization as “Tragedy and Glory”

In “Tragedy and Glory” in the “Unfortunate Era,” I argue the actions of the slaves who participated in the uprising and the colonial officials charged with subduing it were shaped by creolization: an influential socio-historical process involving people from different geographic origins creating new, local cultures and identities.⁶ Over the course of five centuries the Caribbean became home to European colonists and African slaves encountering each other on highly unequal terms in an environment drastically different from their homelands.⁷

Anthropologist Sidney Mintz used the analogy “tragedy and glory” to describe the phenomenon.⁸ European imperialism in the Caribbean tragically resulted in cultural fragmentation for millions of Africans removed from their surroundings and transported overseas as slaves.⁹ Linguist Robert Chaudenson reinforced this sentiment when he considered creolization “a human and social tragedy”: it was set in colonized islands, transpired on islands over the same period of time, and evolved in slave colonies.¹⁰ The calamity, however, was not without glory. For Mintz, subaltern peoples showed remarkable ingenuity by remaking their lives, putting down roots and creating new cultures in their new surroundings despite the oppressive living conditions.¹¹ Although creolization is familiar to all Caribbean peoples, the process was neither static nor the same for each European colony; creolization arose out of colonial social settings that changed overtime, and the characteristics found in each colony were based on an array of different historical and socio-economic factors.

My research analyzes this process in Santo Domingo during the 1790s. The Spanish colony’s creolization was greatly influenced by its unique relationship with St. Domingue (modern day Haiti)—the French slave colony sharing the island of Hispaniola. Santo Domingo underwent precipitous economic and population growth from the mid-to-late eighteenth century driven by interisland trade.¹² Two momentous events, however, disrupted the lucrative economic exchanges. First, slaves and free blacks instigated a largescale revolution in St. Domingue (the Haitian Revolution, 1791-1804), introducing the possibility of slave emancipation spreading throughout the island. Second, in the aftermath of Spain’s loss to France in war (1793-1795), the Treaty of Basel (1795) ceded Santo Domingo to the French, which left local Hispanic elites angered by their abandonment by the Spanish Crown and fearing for their persecution.¹³ The Archbishop of Santo Domingo, Fernando Portillo y Torres, believed the population’s

response was symptomatic of the “unfortunate era” in which they lived, and he lamented changes in the traditional relationship between Hispanic locals and the Spanish empire.¹⁴ The Boca Nigua revolt occurred in this context, and its study holds a wealth of insight into Santo Domingo's social, political and cultural transformation during the tumultuous 1790s. The revolt brought a panorama of Santo Domingo's peoples—Spanish-born (peninsulares) colonial officials, local landowners, racially-mixed autonomous peasants, African-born slaves (bozals) and those born in the colony (creole)—into conflict and collaboration as imperial loyalties were tested and re-examined. What can a microhistory of the Boca Nigua slave revolt tell us about the creolization of Santo Domingo during this period?

Microhistory

Answering the research question requires looking at history in a certain way. I utilize the unique historiographical approach found in microhistory to elucidate the effect of creolization on Santo Domingo's social landscape during the ‘unfortunate era.’ Microhistorical investigation has many advantages for examining complex social processes. First, it helps demonstrate the interplay between the agency of slaves and colonial elites, on the one hand, and the social setting fashioned by the demands of plantation on the other.¹⁵ By shrinking the scope of analysis, the historiographic approach enables the historian to observe the presence of structure and agency within the process of creolization. For scholars interested in historical sociology, microhistory presents a way of exploring social change in which theory-driven sociological perspectives are grounded in historical cases.¹⁶ Second, microhistory uses small circumscribed areas to draw conclusions about more encompassing historical questions.¹⁷ As Charles Joyner succinctly put it: “[Microhistory] search[es] for answers to large questions in small places”¹⁸ Thus, I explain the impact of creolization on the decisions of individuals through

micro-level analysis, but I use this knowledge to better understand the broader impact on Santo Domingo's population. In this way, I draw conclusions about the historic social relationships specific to the Spanish colony and the elements that make its creolization unique in the West Indies. Exploring the underlying causes, development and resolution of the Boca Nigua revolt illustrates how creolization was experienced by various classes and individuals in Santo Domingo during the 1790s.

Creolization, Nations, and Nationalism

The subject is a relevant one because it sheds lights on a stage of creolization scholars link to the origins of the nation—one of the most pervasive features of modern political life.¹⁹ Benedict Anderson's influential theory on the origins of the nation, for example, places creole elites—he defines as locally-born colonial functionaries of European descent—at the center of nation-building in the Americas during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.²⁰ His work *Imagined Communities* highlights a historic period when the meaning and implications of creolization changed significantly and were accompanied by the dissolution of imperial bonds achieved through revolutions and independence wars (e.g. the American Revolution 1776; Haitian Revolution 1804; and the Spanish American Independence Wars, 1808-1825).²¹ *Imagined Communities* explains how a class of literate imperial administrators, or “Creole pioneers,” in Spanish America fostered a collective consciousness around geographical difference in response to being denied equal status with their metropolitan peers.²² Latin Americanists dispute the chronology Anderson presents; they concur nations in the region were forged post-1850 as subsequent developments to state-building projects.²³ Postcolonial republics that emerged in Latin America in the early nineteenth century were not fully conceived national units; they did not have strong states to foster a sense of national identity amongst their

populations.²⁴ In this thesis, I am interested in the “identity of political antecedents”—the historical socio-political relationships nations were born out of.²⁵

Creolization in the Caribbean during the late eighteenth century shares a unique yet complex relationship with the development of nations. The push toward independence driven by creole elites in continental Latin America at the dawn of the nineteenth century did not transpire the same way in Hispanic Caribbean colonies; however, island populations were developing local identities politically and culturally distinct from metropolitan governing authorities.²⁶ By the late eighteenth century when the Boca Nigua revolt erupted, people of the Spanish Caribbean were fashioning “proto-national” bonds—shared feelings of group identification and belonging that preceded the consolidation of modern nations.²⁷ Looking at the creolization of Santo Domingo’s population by fixing attention on the Boca Nigua revolt lends a view into the past social relationships from which early conceptions of the Dominican Republic were drawn.

The Importance of National Navels

Approaching the subject in this manner is fraught with many conceptual challenges related to how nations and nationalism emerged in history and how theorists understand the nation-building process. Many leading thinkers of nationalism favour a modernist paradigm—conceptualizing nations as the product of modernity; they dispute the need to consider premodern social identities and relationships, whether culturally, ethnically or religiously-based.²⁸ One of the most enduring debates in the study of nationalism is the periodization of the nation and the importance attached to historical antecedents.²⁹ This is reflected in preeminent modernist thinker Ernest Gellner's famous combination of questions: “Do nations have navels? Does what precedes the nation matter?”³⁰ Since nations are novel and specific to the industrialized modern era, argue modernists, searching for national identities in premodern social

groups is of little use: “nothing before [the modern era] makes the slightest difference to the issues we face.”³¹ The claim hinges on the necessity of modern forms of social organization and institutions to foster the growth of nationalism: industrialization brought population mobility and divisions of labour in capitalist economies that dovetailed with the rationalization of state and its wider reach into the peoples’ social lives (e.g. inculcating national values through education).³² The localized nature of premodern agrarian societies and the fragmented population’s limited knowledge outside these bounds made it impossible for a shared national consciousness to develop outside a small circle of the learned.³³

The pervasiveness of the modernist perspective is no doubt attributed to its explanatory value, but its rigid periodization of the nation offers little satisfaction to historians seeking to understand how a specific nation came to be.³⁴ The idea nations are constructed *ex nihilo* does not address the key role of the past in legitimizing national aspirations or the continuity of pre-national identities or culture.³⁵ A common modernist response to this quandary is found in Hobsbawm and Ranger’s theory of “invented traditions”: practices implemented by elites to serve the symbolic function of indoctrinating the populous with norms and values that have the allure and appearance of tradition.³⁶ However, the invention or construction of historical narratives and symbols that reinforce national identity are not arbitrarily selected; they must resonate with the common people to maintain their emotional appeal.³⁷ National mythology is invented, but it requires materials to construct from which possess meaning for people.³⁸ Also, the introduction and use of national symbols, myths and narratives are contested in society. Nations are not monolithic, especially in the early stages of development; they are composed of ethnically diverse classes of people with divergent, competing interests.³⁹ Traditions constructed or appropriated by elites to confer national difference exist amid deeper, more complex social

realities.

Race, Ethnicity and the Nation in Latin America and the Caribbean

Chief among these experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean are the socio-historical implications of race and ethnicity and how they play a considerable role in establishing national identification. In continental Spanish America, the seeds of nationalism were sown by creole patriots, mostly members of the upper classes, who adopted unifying language (such as “Americanos”) to rally racially heterogeneous societies to a common anticolonial cause.⁴⁰ The term creole (*criollo* in Spanish) took on new connotations toward the late eighteenth century as colonial-born elites—initially Jesuit exiles from the Spanish American colonies—used scholarship as a medium for valorizing the attributes of their homelands.⁴¹ Uniting populations around a cohesive, encompassing nation, however, proved difficult within a hierarchy where social position was contingent on the “colour-line,” in the words of W.E.B Du Bois.⁴² Since nationalism is based on the congruence of political authority and cultural group, the inward focus of elites faced the dilemma of addressing their own racially heterogeneous populations as compatriots.⁴³ Once the colonial link had been severed, race took on a new weight as a defining attribute of national belonging in early Latin American republics.⁴⁴

In the Caribbean, the legacy of slavery left complex social divisions based on race: “Skin color defined not only one's social condition but also one's ethnic and cultural identity—in addition...to one's position in the structure of production,” writes historian Pedro L. San Miguel.⁴⁵ Prior to the nineteenth century, however, race invoked an identity based on cultural practice, not biological traits.⁴⁶ Imperial expansion in the sixteenth century was no doubt rooted in notions of racial superiority; however, as Bauer shows, modern conceptions of race have been used by historians studying the Caribbean centuries earlier when the meaning of race differed

from its later usage.⁴⁷ As creolization in the late eighteenth century Caribbean and Latin America occurred alongside changing socio-political relations between colony and metropole, the ‘colour-line’ Du Bois believed defined twentieth century race relations did not invoke physical traits so much as it did ancestral ties.⁴⁸ That does not mean racial superiority was not used as a pretext for conquest. Race was conceptualized differently in the late eighteenth century, in conjunction with other cultural traits, and it did not have the scientific sophistication of the modern era, but rather a theological understanding.⁴⁹

The research presented here touches on relationships among Santo Domingo’s racially and ethnically heterogeneous population that predate Dominican nationalism but are related to its development. Those involved in the Boca Nigua revolt—from the slaves who initiated the uprising to the colonial authorities responsible for suppressing it—were experiencing social change that paved the way for shifting conceptions of race and the creation of national identities. I am not arguing the slave revolt was a catalyst for the emergence of the Dominican nation. Rather, focusing on Boca Nigua as a site of inquiry allows a perspective into how pre-national society operated and how different social classes related to each other leading up to the nation-building projects of the nineteenth and twentieth century. The Boca Nigua revolt erupted at a time when the relationship between race and creolization was in flux in the Caribbean and Latin America.⁵⁰ The forging of nations intersected with burgeoning ties between national belonging and race during this pivotal stage of creolization.

National Identity in the Dominican Republic: Addressing Lacunae in the Literature

A microhistory of the Boca Nigua revolt is paramount for addressing gaps in the literature on national identity in the Dominican Republic. Scholars have long engaged in a highly-politicized debate on the origins of the Dominican Nation.⁵¹ Since the 1990s, a significant number of books

and articles on Dominican nationalism have appeared from outside the country.⁵² The dominant theme of this research is the link between race and national identity.⁵³ Anthropologist David Howard, for example, stresses the role of Haiti as “other” in Dominican conceptions of identity, providing a touchstone of difference based on ethnicity and race.⁵⁴ He argues the nation's African ancestry is suppressed in favour of a powerful national discourse that accentuates the nation's heritage with Spain.⁵⁵ The legacy of miscegenation created a racially mixed population (“indio” in contemporary Dominican parlance) that differed from their black Haitian neighbours, and therefore, whiteness became closely associated with “indio,” or racially-mixed, the racial archetype of the nation.⁵⁶ For Howard, ethnicity and race are thus inseparable from Dominican national identity, including its virulently racist expressions.⁵⁷

There are historical dimensions to nation-making overlooked by Howard and others.⁵⁸ Past events are implicated in solidifying racial and national bonds, yet there is little explanation of how they impacted changing conceptions of race.⁵⁹ Watershed moments in Dominican history widely considered to have shaped the development of national identity—the Haitian Revolution (1794-1804), the Haitian Occupation (1822-1844), and the War of Restoration against Spain (1862-1865)—go unexamined. What is needed is a historical survey that traces the roots of racial and ethnic discourses as they were incorporated into conceptions of the nation. The 1790s, the period in which the Haitian Revolution and the Treaty of Basel occurred, are often broadly portrayed as key to the evolution of the Dominican nation, but existing scholarship covering the period favours sweeping macro narratives that drown out the individual voices of contemporaries.⁶⁰

Eugenio Matibag, for example, identifies the Haitian Revolution as one of the “major conjunctures” in Dominican-Haitian relations that placed east and west parts of the island on

divergent courses resulting in two dissimilar national characters.⁶¹ He departs from the historical narrative of perennial antagonism between these two nations embodied in the crude characterization of Dominican and Haitians as gamecocks fighting for cultural, racial, economic and territorial hegemony.⁶² “The interactions between the two nations contradicted the simplistic binary, creating a complex situation in which Dominicans opposed other Dominicans and in which Haitians opposed other Haitians,” notes Matibag.⁶³ Though he explores the historical moments that established and altered the boundaries between Haiti and the Dominican Republic from Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century to the late twentieth century, Matibag does not include how the revolutionary 1790s were experienced by individuals during that time.⁶⁴ Similarly, Dominican historian Alan Cambeira stresses the importance of the Haitian Revolution: it transformed the political and economic dynamics that prompted growth of social power of the class of cattle ranching *hateros*—“a strong, cohesive group of high-minded individuals who increasingly saw their role as self-appointed defenders of an evolving national consciousness.”⁶⁵ He maintains the process began in 1795, but the historical actors during this formative epoch, namely, creole *hatero* leader Juan Sánchez Ramírez, do not appear until 1808.⁶⁶

Like Matibag and Cambeira, Lauren Derby appreciates a periodization of the nation that extends further into the past. She maintains to truly understand the union between race and national identity historians need to consider looking at the seventeenth century and the ways the settlement that would become St. Domingue (later Haiti) was conceptualized amongst early Dominican creoles.⁶⁷ St. Domingue was tied to the products from which its prosperity and power derived—sugar and slaves—therefore, Derby argues, anti-Haitianism amongst early Dominicans was not solely based on race but rather fear of Haitian potency.⁶⁸

Derby states creolization occurred in Santo Domingo within the cattle-ranching trade and was central to the creation of a proto-Dominican identity.⁶⁹ The practice of slavery in Santo Domingo, dominated by cattle production, meant the social position of the slave was much less rigidly defined than in St. Domingue, where work on the sugar plantation was highly stratified and the distance between owner and manager was far greater.⁷⁰ Master and slave worked alongside each other on cattle ranches in Santo Domingo; they travelled together and shared accommodations.⁷¹ This familial form of slavery on the cattle ranches existed due to the socio-economic breakdown of the plantation system early in the Spanish colony's history; nonetheless, in the late eighteenth century, plantation slavery was reintroduced, especially in the outlying areas of the city of Santo Domingo where Boca Nigua operated.⁷² Cattle-ranching dominated the late colonial economy but plantation slavery was gaining traction in the late eighteenth century; the presence of plantation slaves imported from Africa and St. Domingue qualifies Derby's claim about the genteel qualities of slavery in Santo Domingo. French contemporary Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry made no distinction between the way sugar plantation slaves were treated in Santo Domingo and the French Caribbean.⁷³ The numbers of those working in sugar were smaller in comparison to cattle ranching, but their struggles played a crucial role in defining the island's future and they represent a unique group of people living in a colony with a hybridized system of slavery (divided between the sugar plantation and cattle ranch). Exploration of the Boca Nigua slave revolt incorporates their experiences into discussions of Dominican creolization.

Matibag, Cambeira, and Derby's notable contributions to the historiography of Dominican national identity all recognize the significance of the era in formulating national consciousness, yet their importance is removed from the personal lives of various segments of the population

experiencing the change. Researching Boca Nigua during the ‘unfortunate era’ permits a closer look at the mosaic of Santo Domingo’s population before it was the Dominican Republic. The revolt captures the divergent interests of the colony’s heterogenous peoples as they came to terms with Spanish departure, the prospect of abolition, economic ruin, and ongoing revolution in St. Domingue.

Of the more recent scholarship on Dominican nationalism, national formation is analyzed post-1870, and often discussed in conjunction with the seminal role of state modernization and the dictatorial reign of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930-1961).⁷⁴ How preceding events, such as those unfolding in the 1790s, fit into the development of Dominican national identity remains unclear. Martínez-Vergne and April Mayes, for example, focus on Dominican national identity in the urban environment of Santo Domingo and San Pedro Macoris from 1880 to 1916 and 1870 to 1940 respectively. Martínez-Vergne contends Dominican ‘men of letters’ (intellectuals) surveyed the country’s political and economic landscape, and, encouraged by the economic growth and relative political stability, adopted the mantle of constructing a national discourse.⁷⁵ The creole intelligentsia agreed citizenship would become the criteria for admittance to the nation, and they constructed a national project to define quintessential Dominican qualities and values—mixed racial lineage (favouring whiteness), Spanish heritage and love of la patria (homeland).⁷⁶ Michiel Baud uses the phrase “constitutionally white” to capture this tendency in Dominican national identity, reminiscent of the experience of postcolonial Latin American republics on the mainland where race set the parameters for national inclusion.⁷⁷ When framed this way, however, Dominican national identity is largely mitigated by elites through modernizing state institutions.

Similarly, Mayes examines “hispanidad nationalism”—national identity predicated on

linguistic, religious and ethnoracial ties to Spain—in San Pedro de Macorís. She explains how the historical roots of Rafael Trujillo's anti-black, anti-Haitian policy are found in “earnest debates about the Dominican national character” during the latter nineteenth century and racially prejudicial governance made possible through state modernization.⁷⁸ The Trujillo regime seized upon pre-existing notions of Hispanic origin and identity, but the fervor and brutality in which the ideology manifested represented an interruption from the past.⁷⁹ The context—large scale sugar production, economic liberalization, and sharpening class division—again is unmistakably modern. Ginetta Candelario, too, focuses on a modern timeframe; anti-Haitianism emerged as a discourse of ethnic difference created by global power and United States interventions into the at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁸⁰

These contributions to Dominican historiography are important for understanding how racial and national discourses circulated and reinforced each other vis-a-vis the growing power of the state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially after the 1920s when Trujillo rose to power. However, the creolization of the population before this period, when relations between St. Domingue and Santo Domingo underwent significant change in the late eighteenth century, falls by the wayside.

The main players dominating twentieth century nationalism in the Dominican Republic, nonetheless, felt the 1790s were important. Intellectuals who served under Trujillo, such as Manuel Arturo Peña Batlle and Joaquín Balaguer, rationalized their systematization of race and national difference instrumental to state policy on a particular reading of the colonial past.⁸¹ Both evoked an anti-black and anti-Haitian identity that blamed St. Domingue (and later Haiti) for tragedies that had befallen the Dominican Republic.⁸² Batlle idealized the Spanish cultural mark left on Dominicans who resiliently maintained their own traditions despite increasing French

territorial encroachment in the eighteenth century; the culmination of the black republic, Haiti; and its dominance of the eastern part of the island (what is today the Dominican Republic).⁸³ Balaguer, who went on to occupy the role of the president three times following Trujillo's assassination in 1961, emphasized racial composition (in the modern scientific sense of innate biological traits), mythologizing the colonial past due to the supposed racial pureness of the elite Hispanic population on the island who preserved Catholicism, European racial lineage, and the Spanish language.⁸⁴ Using history as an ideological tool, the ideas of Dominican intellectuals close to Trujillo legitimized state intervention to purportedly safeguard Dominican identity. In a cruel demonstration of the state's anti-Haitianism, Trujillo ordered the slaughter of Haitians living in the borderlands in 1937.⁸⁵ If the mass murder of 15,000 Haitians is seen strictly as a means of racial extermination, as Richard Turits explains, one fails to grasp the implications for Dominicans who feared they did not meet the national standard (i.e. blacks and people living in the borderlands kith and kin to their Haitian neighbours).⁸⁶ The slaughter along the borderlands made the consequences of difference clear to Dominicans.

Richard Turits places the rural at the fore of Dominican nation-building during the twentieth century. He focuses on the contribution of the peasantry: "The enduring and important peasant population would condition the contours of Dominican history and the Dominican nation."⁸⁷ For three centuries, argue Turits, Dominican peasants lived in autarkic communities, but were disrupted by growing land speculation brought on by commercial agriculture, placing increasing pressure on peasants living on the land without title.⁸⁸ Modernization was a painful experience for the peasantry, marred by the criminalization of their way of life, and this precipitated an historic exchange between the Dominican peasantry and the dictatorial regime of Trujillo who sought legitimacy and popular support from the peasantry in return for favourable land reform

and a less aggressive approach to economic modernization.⁸⁹

Turits dismisses earlier events in Dominican history as constitutive in the process of national identity formation while acknowledging the peasants were affected by the Haitian Revolution and were participants in wars on the island during the eighteenth century. The degree of autarky maintained by the peasantry is questionable given the disruptions to the social structure of the country over this period. Indeed, when we explore the Boca Nigua revolt, *monteros*—free peasants who subsisted in the woodlands—show a willingness to engage with colonial authorities for economic gain.⁹⁰ Further research is needed to clarify the evolution of Dominican national identity in the nineteenth century. I adopt Anne Eller’s advice to broaden the research agenda to include historical “antecedents.”⁹¹ The suggestion reiterates John Stuart Mill, an early thinker of nationalism, who noted the coalescence of divergent social groups into nations hinges on past political relationships.⁹² I explore the creolization of Santo Domingo, particularly how the process influenced the interactions of colonial inhabitants during the tumultuous 1790s.

The Boca Nigua Revolt as Tragedy and Glory

What do we find when we look beyond modern nationalism and appreciate social relationships in Santo Domingo by examining them close enough to recognize creolization’s effect on individuals in the ‘unfortunate era’? Microhistory of the Boca Nigua revolt affords a view into the innerworkings of Santo Domingo’s colonial society. The sociohistorical process of creolization affected the decision-making of the slaves who participated in the revolt and colonial judges, imperial troops, and local peasants who suppressed it. Before the nation or state institutions formed, Santo Domingo’s heterogenous population—composed of roughly elites, free slaves and slaves—adapted to the changes brought on by Spain’s departure in 1795 in

accordance with the Treaty of Basel, and the influence of French abolitionism in neighbouring St. Domingue.⁹³ The motivating factors behind the slave rebels' decisions to violently seize the plantation and the colonial government's insistence on suppressing the slaves' actions stem from the dynamics of creolization in Santo Domingo during the 1790s.

The process is constituted by an interplay between structure and agency aptly captured by microhistory. Rebel slaves who planned and carried out the Boca Nigua revolt used their creole social position on the plantation to address the grievances of their fellow slaves (i.e. their physical suffering and lack of remuneration for their work).⁹⁴ Slave leaders possessed authority and leadership roles on the plantation made possible by the tragedy of the system of slavery: creolization hinged on economic arrangements, namely the plantation, that created social hierarchies to divide the slave labour force between *bozals* (African-born slaves) and *creoles*.⁹⁵ In the face of this human disaster, Boca Nigua's slave leader gauged their options in the revolutionary context of 1796 and sought the glory of abandoning the plantation for something new. When Boca Nigua had been liberated, they creatively engaged in cultural activities that melded their ethnic origins into one celebratory feast; rebel slaves husband and wife Antonio Carretero and Ana María were crowned king and queen (a tradition shared by Europeans and Africans).⁹⁶ I show that creolization was also informed by the conscious choices of slaves. The slave leadership was not uniform. The rebel slave driver who plotted the uprising, Francisco Sopó, fell out of favour with his fellow slaves for abandoning the plan and aligning himself with his master. Microhistory reveals the complexities creolization as it relates to structural forces (such as economic production) but also conscious choice.

The intricacies of tragedy and glory, choice and social forces, can also be gauged in colonial authorities' response to the Boca Nigua revolt. The judges and governor who took leading roles

in suppressing the uprising were not creoles; however, they were influenced by local elites who remained on the island after many slave-owners fled due to the Haitian Revolution.⁹⁷ In the mid-to-late eighteenth century, Santo Domingo's first creole elite emerged as a political voice in colonial affairs demanding more from the empire.⁹⁸ Noteworthy creole theologian Antonio Sánchez Valverde's *Idea del valor de la isla Española* (1785) blamed Spain's unwillingness to support investment in plantations and/or lessen restrictions on the slave trade as the primary source of contention, and framed the metropole's historical neglect as detrimental to local interests.⁹⁹ These concerns, however, were being addressed by the Bourbons in Spain: taxes on slaves working in agricultural production were reformed to benefit plantation owners; the slave trade was liberalized and ports were opened.¹⁰⁰ Thus, appearance of a politicized creole elite devoted to the economic affairs of the colony was conceived as a project to expand plantation slavery; and while creoles were critical of Spain, they recognized their dependency on the empire.

The Haitian Revolution and Treaty of Basel put an abrupt end to the realization of Valverde's intended plan for Santo Domingo to achieve the glory of wealth and power by following St. Domingue's path to development. As the French embraced abolitionism to deal with the slave revolution beginning in 1793 and later took control of the Santo Domingo via the Treaty of Basel, the threat to the creole elite project was overwhelming. Local elites expressed anger over the dissolution of the colonial arrangement with Spain, fearing persecution at the hands of the French.¹⁰¹ In response to Spain's cession of Santo Domingo, creole elites directed their rage toward colonial officials, who they blamed for the king's abandonment of the colony.¹⁰² The archbishop claimed the hostility was so great he feared their patriotic passion ("pasion Patriotica") would culminate in violent subversion.¹⁰³ The official response to the

Boca Nigua slave revolt by Santo Domingo's colonial government was motivated by fear of further depreciation of the population's trust and the exacerbation of lingering tensions concerning Santo Domingo's cession. Colonial authorities were determined to demonstrate the relevance of their power to locals, thereby setting an example for slaves considering rebellion and the local population who blamed colonial authorities for the departure of the king. Colonial authorities invested considerable resources into ensuring the rebel slaves were defeated and brought to justice swiftly. Because Hacienda de Boca Nigua was widely-known as a large and efficiently run plantation in Santo Domingo, it likely held a symbolic function embodying the creole vision for the Hispanic colony's future prosperity.¹⁰⁴

The Boca Nigua affair became a battleground for divergent outcomes of the same process: creolization. Slaves and elites were not competing to found nations, which would later be made possible through modernization and state institutions; they were adjusting to a rapidly changing colonial world. On the day the rebel slaves were executed, the tension came to a fever pitch with the colonial governor taking extraordinary measures to ensure a large military contingent consisting of over one hundred soldiers were out in force monitoring the crowds that gathered at the gallows. His commitment to assert his authority was driven by potential danger of losing public legitimacy for the government and empire. The public castigation served as a tremendous display of force that functioned to resist the wave of slave emancipation in which its western neighbours were at the epicentre.

Sources and Chapter Summaries

“Tragedy and Glory” in the “Unfortunate Era” is an interdisciplinary effort. Given the many facets of creolization, from its historical implications to its influence on political and cultural affairs, I incorporate an array of secondary sources into the research. These works span the fields

of humanities and social sciences. The perspectives of linguists, anthropologists, historians, and sociologists reviewed here elicits the multidimensional nature of creolization in the Caribbean. Since the focus of the research project is a historical event (i.e. Boca Nigua revolt), primary sources produced by actors who witnessed the violence at Boca Nigua, reported on it, or lived during the period make up the central body of sources surveyed.¹⁰⁵ Reconstructing the Boca Nigua revolt requires close analysis of both the primary source documents and secondary literature. This raises questions about the reliability of the materials used. How can we know events transpired in the way they are described? I aimed to capture the Boca Nigua revolt as accurately as possible by cross-referencing the primary sources. Many of the key facts concerning the affair—the main participants in the revolt and the timeline of how it transpired—are confirmed by the contemporaries who documented it. In addition, while secondary literature may arrive at different assessments of why the Boca Nigua revolt occurred and the factors underlying its successes and failures, there is little dissent about the overall timeline. Where there is divergence between the primary and secondary sources, or a perspective unique to the author, I have indicated so.

All primary texts related to the Boca Nigua affair and the cession of Santo Domingo to France are from sets of digital images of the original documents. These resources are made available at the Portal de Archivos Españoles, which houses archival material online through Spain's Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.¹⁰⁶ English sources are also included either in digitized book form or through images made available via online collections (e.g. Sabin Americana, the Burney Collection, and the Hathi Trust Digital Library).

In the next chapter, I introduce creolization conceptually by tracing the semantic shifts in the Caribbean usage of creole from its origins in the sixteenth century Iberian conquest of the New

World to the revolutionary period in which the Boca Nigua revolt erupted. To explore the dynamic nature of creolization in the region, I draw on poet Edward K. Brathwaite's book on the process in Jamaica from 1770 to 1820 for comparative analysis.¹⁰⁷ Likewise, linguist Robert Chaudenson's study of the social foundations of creole languages in the French Caribbean and Indian Ocean colonies is consulted to outline the concept of creole as a distinct structural designation pertaining to slaves on plantations in French settlements.¹⁰⁸

Theorizing creolization also requires recognizing it was experienced differently depending on one's position in colonial power structure: Europeans and Africans both shared a history of emigration, however, the latter adapted under conditions far removed from the former. Blacks were forcibly transported and they held the lowest status and level of protection in society. To gain insight into how creolization is constituted from below by slaves on plantations, I utilize the ideas of anthropologist Sidney Mintz. For discussion of the political aspects pertaining to elites, I examine Benedict Anderson's previously mentioned *Imagined Communities*, and his Latin Americanist critics in the fields of history and literary theory.

Chapter 2 is where I expound on the key tenets of microhistory that form the historiographic approach employed in my research. Microhistory is a way of thinking and writing about history that problematizes encompassing narratives by focusing attention on the obscurities, complexities, and exceptional qualities unearthed through close observation of a small historical site.¹⁰⁹ Size, however, should not be mistaken for influence: microhistorians are interested in larger structural phenomenon in society but seek to reconcile the broader perspectives with that of the individual. Through microhistory macro perspectives and consequential social structures are brought into focus on a micro-level. The microhistorical approach, therefore, is at odds with postmodern variants that critique broader theoretical considerations and historical social

phenomena as outdated and ideologically loaded.¹¹⁰

I contend microhistory is best-suited to analyze creolization in Santo Domingo because of the subject matter's grand scale: the process spanned centuries and involved vital interrelated historical processes (i.e. colonialism, the Atlantic slave trade, and the birth of nationalism in the Americas). The Boca Nigua revolt sets the parameters set for this study, which enables the researcher a closer, more intimate depiction of history by showing how socio-economic structures affect the lives of individuals and their conscious choices.

In chapter 3 I narrow the focus to the creolization of the Spanish colony leading up to the revolutionary 1790s. The development of sugar plantations and the importation of slave labour central to the process in the Caribbean was underway in Santo Domingo in the sixteenth century; however, through imperial neglect the colony's sugar industry collapsed, and Spanish colonists emigrated to other colonial ventures in the continental Americas.¹¹¹ The decline drove slaves who worked on plantations to disperse into the rural countryside where they formed autonomous mixed-race free peasants.¹¹² I turn to Dominican history to argue that while Santo Domingo's creolization is marked by social, geographic and ethnic distance between its peoples, by the mid-seventeenth century the situation changed.

Local elites were emboldened by increased economic prosperity and population growth occurring in the city of Santo Domingo. They embraced a project to Hispanicize the colony—one that would return it to its glorious past. The expansion of Spanish virtues included the rejuvenation of plantation slavery as a viable economic model—something locals had been requesting assistance with from the metropole.¹¹³ The Haitian Revolution, however, stifled creole elites' aspirations in Santo Domingo, and things worsened for slave-owners when the Treaty of Basel incorporated the Hispanic east into abolitionist St. Domingue. The changing

fortunes of slavery brought conflict and collaboration among segments of the population into closer, creolizing relationships.

In this third chapter, I begin introducing the key primary sources examined in the research process. The sources consist for the most part of colonial officials' letters addressed mainly to statesman Manuel de Godoy from: (1) Judge Manuel Bravo oversaw the military contingent sent to Boca Nigua to quell the disturbance; (2) the head of the Audiencia José Antonio de Vrizar and his court scribe Jose Francisco Hidalgo administered the sentences to the rebel Slaves; (3) governor Joaquín García y Moreno who presided over sentences pronounced by the court; and (4) the Archbishop Fernando Portillo y Torres' gave his observations on the Boca Nigua uprising in correspondence on a host of important current events.¹¹⁴ Except for the Archbishop, all the testimonies come from authorities directly responsible for addressing the revolt either militarily or through jurisprudence. As representatives of the Spanish Crown, colonial elites were hostile to the groundswell of revolutionary fervor in the period. And it is through this lens they approached Boca Nigua as a potential threat to order but also an event that would further diminish relations between local elite and colonial officials.

In chapter 4, I investigate the revolt's underlying causes, development, and its culmination in a public display of retribution against the rebel slaves. Relying primarily on primary sources, I explain how the plot to kill the whites on the plantation evolved into a full-fledged uprising. In particular, I highlight how as a result of the development of a slave hierarchy central to plantation production, colonial-born slaves were granted more freedom, trust and benefits from their masters. On the other hand, their position as middlemen between the master and the other slaves meant they were looked upon as leaders with authority. The plot of the revolt was set in motion by slave-driver Francisco Sopó once he learned slaves who looked to him as a

“godfather” died in tragic circumstances (e.g. suicide and a suspicious illness). Sopó enlisted the help of other slaves, and he used his status on the plantation to plan and gain access to resources that would make the revolt a success.

The slave leadership began to fracture before the revolt over the issue of Sopó's close ties to his master, whose life he ultimately saved while trying to resolve the situation when he suspected the revolt would fail. Close investigation of the revolt shows the interstices that existed in the slave community and the tensions associated with slave creolization. Colonial authorities wrote about Sopó differently than the wayward slave rebel Tomás Congo, whose “terrible customs” were known to locals.¹¹⁵ Creolization did not predetermine loyalty or disloyalty to the master—not all creole slaves followed Sopó's purported betrayal—but the process did present Sopó and others with a range of possible options for pursuing certain objectives. Microhistory highlights the agency of the various slave rebels while simultaneously revealing the structural pressures that shaped their choices.

The colonial government responded with a sense of urgency. Officials believed the revolt threatened the capital; however, when examined closer, their reaction was fashioned by an underlying fear that the local population's confidence would deteriorate further than it already had. The capture and trial of the rebel slaves was conducted in way that would convey a message to the slaves in the east about the ramifications of pursuing emancipation. But the lesson was just as much directed at the creole local population who made it known to officials in the capital, Santo Domingo, they were angered by the Treaty of Basel. Furthermore, observing the Boca Nigua revolt through a micro lens illuminates the development of interactions between the countryside and capital considered key by the governor of Santo Domingo. Governing elites relied on monteros—a rural people who subsisted autonomously in the mountains—to apprehend

the rebels of Boca Nigua.¹¹⁶

Finally, in chapter 5, I revisit the central argument and supporting claims from the preceding chapters. The conclusions drawn from each chapter are reviewed vis-à-vis the research question. I underscore how the findings of this thesis relate to contemporary literature on Dominican nationalism and its related phenomenon (i.e. national identity and consciousness). I demonstrate how my research has the potential to chart new paths for studying the historical roots of the Dominican nation. In chapter 5, I situate the Boca Nigua conflict within a wider periodization of the nation and historical events considered definitive in forging the nation. Creolization, microhistory and a focus on the 1790s, when taken together, illuminate areas understudied in Dominican history (plantation slavery, colonial authorities' relationships with creole landowners, and the impact of the revolutionary events of the 1790s on the population of Santo Domingo). Looking at the process of creolization through a microscopic lens during the tumultuous 1790s in Santo Domingo yields different results than tracing nationalism itself: it enables the historian to look beyond the modernist periodization of nations, and instead identify the earlier developments as pivotal to national formation. Microhistory aides historians in obtaining a closer view of how people experienced this important period for the Dominican nation. For example, my research reframes discussion around slavery in Santo Domingo and its population's complex relationship with Haiti at the end of the eighteenth century. I conclude with a call for further exploration of the social classes and groups such as women and slaves that are difficult to capture because their marginal positions in society are reflected in the historical record.

Notes

- ¹ David Patrick Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s," in *A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and David Patrick Geggus (Bloomington, IN: Indian University Press, 1997), 141.
- ² Jose Francisco Hidalgo, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda Boca-Nigua*, December 30, 1796, letter, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte (MECD), Portal de Archivos Españoles (PARES), Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Estado (ES) 13. N.33, digital image 8, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed January 18, 2017). All translations are mine. For more details see chapter 4, "Creolization and the Boca Nigua Revolt."
- ³ Joaquín García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, December 31, 1796, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI, ES, 58. N. 202, digital images 1-2, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 5, 2017); D. José Antonio de Vrizar, *Regente Audiencia Santo Domingo acusa recibo R.O.*, July 8, 1797, MECD, PARES, AGI, ES 13. N.45, digital image 1, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed January 19, 2017).
- ⁴ Lauren Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic," in *Blacks, Coloureds and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Latin America.*, ed. Nancy Priscilla Naro (London, UK: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2003), 12.
- ⁵ Sara E. Johnson, for example, discusses the lack of secondary material on the Boca Nigua revolt. Sara E. Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 62.
- ⁶ Christine Jourdan, "Creolization: Sociocultural Aspects," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, vol.5, 2nd ed. (2015): 117, <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.12045-8>.
- ⁷ Sidney W. Mintz, "Enduring Substances, Trying Theories: The Caribbean Region as Oikoumenê," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2, no. 2 (1996): 301, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3034097>.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 305.
- ⁹ Sidney W. Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1974), 11-12.
- ¹⁰ Robert Chaudenson, *Creolization of Language and Culture*, rev. Salikoko S. Mufwene, trans. Sheri Pargman, Salikoko S. Mufwene, Sabrina Billings and Michelle AuCoin (London: Routledge, 2002), 34.
- ¹¹ Mintz, "Enduring Substances," 305.
- ¹² Frank Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic: A National History* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Weiner, 1998), 87.
- ¹³ Fernando Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre cesión de la isla a franceses*, October 24, 1795, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI, ES.11B. N.64., digital image 4, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed January 13, 2017).
- ¹⁴ In the original Spanish: "de infausta epoca." *Ibid.*, digital image 2.
- ¹⁵ István M. Szijártó and Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 5.
- ¹⁶ Craig Calhoun, "Afterword: Why Historical Sociology?," in *Handbook of Historical Sociology* (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 383-384, doi: 10.4135/9781848608238.n28.
- ¹⁷ John Brewer, "Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life," *Cultural and Social History* 7, no. 1 (2010): 96. doi.10.2752/147800410X477359.

¹⁸ Charles Joyner cited in István M. Szijártó, “Puzzle, Fractal, Mosaic: Thoughts on Microhistory,” 22 November 2013, <http://microhistory.org/?e=48&w=journal-of-microhistory-2008>. See endnote xxiii.

¹⁹ See Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean, Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

²⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 47. In ch.2 of this thesis, I discuss the conceptual complexities of creolization, particularly how it can connote cultural and racial intermixture while also referring to the elites who were born in the colonies that closely identified with their ancestral homelands.

²¹ Knight, 159.

²² Anderson, 48.

²³ John Charles Chasteen, “Introduction: Beyond Imagined Communities,” in *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, ed. Sara Castro-Klarén and John Charles Chasteen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), XVIII.

²⁴ John Charles Chasteen, *Americanos: Latin America's Struggle for Independence* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2008), 5, <http://www.myilibrary.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca?ID=152904>, (10 March 2017).

²⁵ John Stuart Mill, “Considerations on Representative Government,” in *On Liberty and Other Essays*, ed. John Gray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 427.

²⁶ For example, Jamaica did not officially secure its independence until 1962; however, as shown in chapter 2, the population of the British colony began discussing its autonomy when the American Revolution in 1776 broke out, and more earnestly in the wake of the Haitian Revolution.

²⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 46-47.

²⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2012), 50.

²⁹ See *When is the Nation? Towards an Understanding of Theories of Nationalism*, ed. Atsuko Ichijo and Gordana Uzelac (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005).

³⁰ Ernest Gellner, “Ernest Gellner's Reply: ‘Do Nations have Navels?’” *Nations and Nationalism* 2, no.3 (1996): 366-370. doi.10.1111/j.1469-8219.1996.tb00003.x

³¹ Ibid., 366; In a debate with Steven Grosby, Eric Hobsbawm makes the same point. See Eric Hobsbawm, “Comment on Steven Grosby: The Primordial, Kinship and Nationality,” in *When is the Nation? Towards an Understanding of Theories of Nationalism*, ed. Atsuko Ichijo and Gordana Uzelac (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 83.

³² Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 18.

³³ Ibid., 25; 46.

³⁴ Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 64.

³⁵ Anthony D. Smith, “Memory and Modernity: Reflections on Ernest Gellner's Theory of Nationalism,” *Nations and Nationalism* 2, no.3 (1996), 374. doi.10.1111/j.1469-8219.1996.tb00004.x.

³⁶ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1.

³⁷ Michiel Baud, "Constitutionally White": The Forging of a National Identity in the Dominican Republic," in *Ethnicity in the Caribbean: Essays in Honor of Harry Hoetink*, ed. G. Oostindie (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 121.

³⁸ Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 62-63.

³⁹ Baud, 121-122.

⁴⁰ See Chasteen, *Americanos: Latin America's Struggle for Independence*, 2.

⁴¹ Will Fowler, *Latin America since 1780*. 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016), 12.

⁴² W. E. B. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 3, <http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=114694>, (accessed March 12, 2017).

⁴³ Nicola Miller, "The Historiography of Nationalism and National Identity in Latin America." *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no.2 (2006): 203, doi: 10.1111/j.1469-8129.2006.00237.x.

⁴⁴ Ralph Bauer, "The Hemispheric Genealogies of 'Race': Creolization and the Cultural Geography of Colonial Difference across the Eighteenth-Century Americas," in *Hemispheric American Studies*, ed. Caroline F. Levander and Robert S. Levine (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 37.

⁴⁵ Pedro L. San Miguel, *Imagined Island: History, Identity and Utopia in Hispaniola*, trans. Jane Ramirez (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 35-36.

⁴⁶ Bauer, 39.

⁴⁷ Bauer describes the modern understanding of race as a "transnational discourse of identity and difference based on biological factors, such as skin color (i.e., the 'white,' 'black,' 'red,' 'brown,' or 'yellow' race). Bauer, 36.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁴⁹ In chapter 3 I introduce creole historian and theologian Antonio Sánchez Valverde, who argued in favour of slavery from a religious and moral standpoint.

⁵⁰ David Patrick Geggus, "Slavery, War, and Revolution in the Greater Caribbean, 1789-1815, in *A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and David Patrick Geggus (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 1-50.

⁵¹ For a comprehensive overview see Teresita Martínez-Vergne, *Nation and Citizen in the Dominican Republic, 1880-1916* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 18; April J. Mayes, *The Mulatto Republic: Class, Race, and Dominican National Identity* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2014), 4.

⁵² Among the earliest and profound contributions on the subject are Lauren Derby's scholarship. See Lauren Derby, "Haitians, Magic, and Money: Raza and Society in the Haitian-Dominican Borderlands, 1900 to 1937," *Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History* 36, no. 3 (1994): 488-526, www.jstor.org/stable/179294; "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic." Also, see Martínez-Vergne; Mayes; David Howard, *Coloring the Nation: Race and Ethnicity in the Dominican Republic* (Oxford, UK: Signal Books, 2001); Richard Lee Turits, *Foundations of Despotism: Peasants, the Trujillo Regime, and Modernity in Dominican History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); G. E. B Candelario, *Black Behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Baud, "Constitutionally White."

⁵³ Martínez-Vergne, 18.

⁵⁴ Howard, 5.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 41.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 154-155.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 17; 41. Howard seems to imply, for example, the concept of *la raza* (translated roughly as people/ethnic group) means the same thing during the time of his study during the 1990s as it did throughout history. His interviews ask participants how they view concepts such as “*la raza dominicana*” and “*indiola*,” but he fails to consider how these meanings may have changed over time

⁵⁹ Michiel Baud, “Race and Nation in the Dominican Republic,” *New West Indian Guide*, 76(3/4): 314, www.jstor.org/stable/41850200.

⁶⁰ The Haitian Revolution is contrapuntal in Eugenio Matibag, *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint: Nation, State, and Race on Hispaniola* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 8. It is influential in generating nationalist sentiment in Alan Cambeira, *Quisqueya la Bella: The Dominican Republic in Historical and Cultural Perspective* (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 1997), 136-141.

⁶¹ Matibag, 8.

⁶² Michele Zucker, *Why the Cocks Fight: Dominican, Haitians and the Struggle for Hispaniola* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999), 12-13.

⁶³ Matibag, 11.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 8-10.

⁶⁵ Cambeira, 142.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 142-143.

⁶⁷ Derby, “National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic,” 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 36.

⁷¹ Ibid., 19.

⁷² Pons, 89.

⁷³ Maria Cristina Fumagalli, “Landscaping Hispaniola: Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry and Border Politics” in *On the Edge: Writing the Border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic* (Liverpool University Press, 2015): 36, doi: 10.5949/liverpool/9781781381601.003.0002.

⁷⁴ See Martínez-Vergne; Mayes; Richard Lee Turits; G. E. B Candelario; Lauren Derby, *The Dictator's Seduction: Politics and the Popular Imagination in the Era of Trujillo* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

⁷⁵ Martínez-Vergne, 19.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 21-23.

⁷⁷ Baud, “Constitutionally White,” 121.

⁷⁸ Mayes, 11.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁰ Candelario, 8.

⁸¹ Miguel, 25.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 24.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 26.

⁸⁵ Richard Lee Turits, "A World Destroyed, A Nation Imposed: The 1937 Haitian Massacre in the Dominican Republic," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82, no. 3 (2002): 589-635, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/12744>.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 594. See Derby, "Haitians, Magic, and Money: Raza and Society in the Haitian-Dominican Borderlands, 1900 to 1937."

⁸⁷ Turits, *Foundation of Despotism*, 49.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 67.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁰ In ch.4 I explain this aspect of the Boca Nigua revolt.

⁹¹ Anne Eller, "'Awful Pirates' and 'Hordes of Jackals': Santo Domingo/The Dominican Republic in Nineteenth-Century Historiography," *Small Axe*, vol. 18, no.2 (2014): 82. http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/journals/small_axe/v018/18.2.eller.html.

⁹² Mill, 427.

⁹³ Franklin J. Franco, *Black, Mulattos, and the Dominican Nation*, trans. Patricia Mason (New York: Routledge, 2015), 57. Franco notes in 1794, Santo Domingo's population was approximately 35,000 ranchers, colonial officials, soldiers, small-scale farmers, and members of the ecclesiastical body; 38,000 freed slaves; and 30,000 slaves. He does not specify the breakdown of either the free slaves or slaves.

⁹⁴ Fernando Portillo y Torres, digital image 19.

⁹⁵ Chaudenson, 113.

⁹⁶ Manuel Bravo, *Manuel Bravo solicita merced*, December 12, 1796, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI, ES.16. N.12, digital image 10, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed October 13, 2017).

⁹⁷ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 45.

⁹⁸ Roberto Cassá, "Historiography of the Dominican Republic," in *General History of the Caribbean. Vol. VI: Methodology and Historiography of the Caribbean*, ed. B.W. Higman (London: UNESCO/Macmillan, 1999), 388-389.

⁹⁹ Miguel, 9.

¹⁰⁰ Franco, 55.

¹⁰¹ Torres, “Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre cesión de la isla a franceses,” digital image 2.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰⁴ Antonio Sánchez Valverde singled out the region of the Nigua river where the Boca Nigua refinery was located as one known for its sugar plantations. Boca Nigua being the largest, it is likely well known in the area. See Antonio Sánchez Valverde, *Idea del valor de la isla Española* (Santo Domingo [sic]: Imprenta Nacional, 1862), Harvard University, Hathi Trust Digital Library, 35; 121, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044080395759>.

¹⁰⁵ For example, judge Manuel Bravo’s official account sent to Manuel de Godoy tells of his firsthand experience apprehending the slave rebels.

¹⁰⁶ <http://pares.mcu.es>; <https://www.mecd.gob.es/portada-mecd>.

¹⁰⁷ Robert Chaudenson, *Creolization of Language and Culture*.

¹⁰⁸ Edward Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

¹⁰⁹ Carlo Ginzburg, John Tedeschi and Anne C. Tedeschi, “Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It,” *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (1993): 10-11, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343946>.

¹¹⁰ Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, “‘The Singularization of History’: Social History and Microhistory within the Postmodern State of Knowledge,” *Journal of Social History* 36, no. 3 (2003): 701-735, www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable.

¹¹¹ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 25.

¹¹² Ibid., 29.

¹¹³ Franco, 55.

¹¹⁴ The Archbishop reports on British movements throughout the island, the French Commissioners in St. Domingue, transferring the church’s resources back to Spain, and his transfer to Havana.

¹¹⁵ Bravo, digital image 9.

¹¹⁶ García y Moreno, digital image 10.

Chapter 2: Creolization under the Microscope

In this chapter, I focus on important theoretical and historiographical considerations for analyzing creolization. Critical review of scholarly perspectives is advantageous for comprehending how the process is informed by dynamic social structures and political relationships rooted in Caribbean history. I survey seminal ideas in the literature to construct a frame of reference for evaluating the process in Santo Domingo during the 1790s (discussed in Ch.3). This involves identifying the common threads underlying the birth of Caribbean societies: imperial subordination, waves of forced migration and settlement, and mass enslavement for the purposes of agricultural production.¹ Yet, patterns of colonization produced marked variations among the colonies vis-à-vis their respective social structures, demographics, cultural affinities, and political relationships that problematize comparative analysis.² To possess analytic value for this study, theoretical assessment of creolization must account for broader historical features of the region while remaining grounded in a specific colonial setting where the interactions of various social groups fashioned a “new locally produced system of meaning.”³

Theorizing, however, relies on generalization which undervalues the complexities of individual experiences and the agency of historical actors. I propose microhistory as the most suitable approach to mitigating these effects, and therefore lending a clearer picture of creolization’s influence on the various actors involved in the Boca Nigua slave revolt. The historiographical approach addresses the tension between structure and agency by reducing it down to a scale where their interaction is more readily discernable.⁴ Still, microhistorical research does not dispense with macro narratives and social processes; it acknowledges, without their input, there is a risk of producing fragmentary, trivial history.

Creoles and Creolization

From inception, the term ‘creole’ implied adaptation to life in the colonies, and it applied to settlers and slaves whose cultural ties were divided between their birthplace and ancestral homelands.⁵ The process involved in this change is known as creolization—a concept developed by linguists to aid research on the formation of pidgin languages (i.e. creology/creolistics).⁶ Scholarship in social sciences and humanities later adopted the concept, but focused on the socio-economic and cultural factors driving the creation of languages and cultural change in Caribbean societies.⁷ In recent years, the concept has been appropriated as a heuristic metaphor for explicating contemporary globalization and an analogy for the proliferation of hybridized cultural identities.⁸ Many scholars in response have critiqued unqualified usage of the concept on the grounds it tends to ignore historical specificity and geographical boundaries.⁹ I begin by exploring the historical semantics of the term ‘creole,’ from which creolization originates, to clarify a process often obscured by wide application and lack of a consistent conceptual framework.¹⁰

The term creole emerged in the sixteenth century at a time when European monarchs for the first time began claiming overseas territories as extensions of their authority. Its etymology is Iberian, originally taken from the Portuguese ‘crioulo,’ but over time it became more closely linked to the Spanish ‘criollo,’ an amalgamation of the verb ‘criar’ (to raise, bring up, create) and the noun ‘colono’ (settler or colonist).¹¹ Domination of the New World by white Europeans challenged prevailing cosmological and epistemological assumptions about the natural world and its affect on people living in Caribbean colonies abroad. Intrigued by a distant, previously unknown world, Spanish humanists utilized the term criollo to indicate differentiation—a point of contrast between the New world and Europe—in the taxonomy of imperial power.

Creoles figured prominently in the production and dissemination of knowledge chronicled about the Americas:

[L]ocal conditions...meant a distinctive environment in every sense (physical, political, cultural) and distinctive attitudes of the inhabitants— indeed the two are inseparable, as has now become clear: mentality was strongly conditioned by New World environment.¹²

The Spanish Crown's first official cosmographer of the Indies, Juan López de Velasco, relied on ideas about the influence of tropical climates on criollos to differentiate them from their Iberian-born parentage.¹³ The distinction did not connote favourable attributes. Within half a century of Spanish conquest in the Caribbean, colonial administrative officials and clergymen were labelling creoles "indolent, vice-ridden, haughty, and ignorant."¹⁴

The word creole did not initially, however, evoke racial connotations until the eighteenth century when it became overshadowed by white creoles' spirited repudiation of environmental theories in determining social status.¹⁵ Rejecting natural conditions in the colonies as the basis of their perceived inequality, and having no claim to peerage in the same way as peninsulares (those born in Iberian Peninsula), white creoles turned to race in the eighteenth century to claim equal treatment with their metropolitan compatriots.¹⁶ The relationship between creolization and race was culturally and geographically defined in its early stages, which meant creole could apply to either black or white residents depending on the demographics of each respective colony.¹⁷ But how they experienced creolization was very different due to prevailing social factors and the subaltern status of blacks. I now illustrate how the term was applied and used to refer to white colonials and black slaves, and the resulting implications for creolization.

Hispanic colonies in the Caribbean were founded by conquistadores with the intent of benefiting from the extraction of natural resources and spreading the Christian religion. Culturally, colonies were conceived as microcosms of their home society.¹⁸ The relationship

between colonial settlers and metropole was predicated on the occupation of territory adopted by the former as their own despite arriving as foreigners with no ancestral ties to the area.¹⁹

Settlements relied on the vast Spanish colonial project for survival. Spanish Creoles in the early colonial period were migrants who adapted to the harsh realities of their Caribbean environs.

Over time they became native to the colonies but remained tied to the metropole through cultural affinities and political subordination. The original meaning and use of creole implies this dichotomous position, and the consciousness of difference was no doubt meaningful for contemporaries who used it at the time.²⁰

Though the term creolization is modern, it describes a process with origins in antiquity, which includes waves of migration, the acclimatization of migrants and settlement of their offspring in the colonies. These key components are recognized across the Caribbean as indispensable features of creolization. Scholars turn to socio-historical processes such as indigenization to analyze the process.²¹ Definitions of creolization suggest intensive cultural reorientation and socialization in the New World, often described as “restructuring.”²² Hispanic colonization of the Caribbean dominated the sixteenth century, lasting well over one hundred years, and during this period an understanding of creole as a form of indigeneity was forged. The oppositional nature of creole's meaning, however, was not restricted to European colonists, nor were they the dominant social group to migrate and indigenize in the colonies.

Creole also denoted the status of slaves—whether they were native-born or transported from Africa—and the “seasoning” they underwent as part of their coerced induction into plantation life.²³ Both slave and master had to integrate into colonial life, yet the conditions in which they did were qualitatively different. European settlers were not part of migration waves that reached the pace or scope of that imposed on African slaves: “these human tides [were] among the most

massive demographic and acculturational phenomena in world history.”²⁴ Indeed, their arrival forever changed the ethnic and cultural complexion of the Caribbean.

The transatlantic slave trade played a significant role in the conquest of the Americas and subsequent agricultural exploitation. On Hispaniola, site of the first New World settlements, African slaves arrived in 1500 on orders of King Ferdinand to work constructing fortifications on the island.²⁵ Their presence in the New World was hastened by the shortage of labour made possible via. the “Holocaust of Hispaniola” whereby between ninety-four and ninety-nine percent (3 to 5 million inhabitants) of the island’s indigenous population were annihilated through the brutality of conquest (i.e. gruelling manual labour, disease and everyday violence).²⁶ Slavery was deemed necessary to cultivate the abundance of land at the empire's disposal, and it became an indelible feature of life in the New World. But the lives of Iberian creoles were different from their counterparts' in colonies seized by Northern European imperial designs due to the differences in the way the Caribbean was colonized.

The Opening of the Spanish Caribbean: The Sugar Revolution and Plantation Societies

Slaves' presence in the New World intensified when non-Iberian powers—namely the French, British and Dutch—challenged Spain's political dominance of the region during the first half of the seventeenth century. The colonial vernacular of their Spanish and Portuguese forebears was appropriated by other European colonists. Robert Chaudenson masterful study of the socio-historical phenomenon that established creole languages in French colonies elucidates how colonists inherited a Spanish colonial vernacular. The Spanish word *criollo*, he explains, appears in 1598 as a French translation of Jesuit priest José de Acosta’s *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*.²⁷ The language of Iberian colonization was inducted into the French language and commonly used by colonists as their presence became more entrenched in the region. The word

“bozal” is another descriptor taken from the Spanish to distinguish between native-born slaves and those born in Africa.²⁸ In the French Caribbean colonies, planters put bozals to work after six months—the time allotted for adaption and socialization into work life.²⁹ It was deemed necessary for their recovery from the traumatic and strenuous journey from the shores of Africa to the Caribbean. Once they arrived, creole slaves were placed in charge of their socialization due to the fact bozals could not speak the language or understand what was required of them concerning the work assigned to them.³⁰

But, as Chaudenson shows, creolization came about due to significant structural change associated with new dominant production model that distanced masters from their slaves with increasing complexity and scale. Plantation societies differed from the earlier stage of “homestead societies” in that they did not require creole slaves to induct the bozals into colonial life.³¹ As the production process shifted to larger plantations, creole slaves became sparse but valued because they had already undergone their adaption phase and understood the daily expectations of plantation work life.³²

Northern European colonies' appropriation and application of creole was shaped by vastly different social features than the Hispanic islands. The sugar revolution associated with French and British colonies in the eastern Caribbean radically transformed the structure of colonial society in the Caribbean. These historical socio-economic structures greatly shaped the creolization process of the various island colonies. At first white landowners and their indentured servants from England and France began the agricultural development of multiple crops on small land holdings.³³ Barbados and Guadeloupe were the earliest colonies transformed into plantation societies; in both, production shifted to sugar mono-culture cultivated by African slaves.³⁴ It coincided with sweeping demographic changes that saw an influx of black slaves into the region

and the concurrent emigration of whites.³⁵ Small-holdings were redrawn and amassed into large-scale plantations to manage their immense production capacity, which enabled the white planters to build sizeable fortunes.³⁶

The sugar revolution, beginning with Barbados in the 1640s, paved way for the spread of an economic model and social structure in the plantation. These developments were later perfected in French St. Domingue, a third of Hispaniola ceded to France in 1697, and English Jamaica. C.L.R. James noted the position of creole slaves in St. Domingue in his classic work on the Haitian Revolution, *The Black Jacobins*.³⁷

The creole Negro was more docile than the slave who had been born in Africa. Some said he was more intelligent. Others doubted that there was much difference though the creole slaves knew the language and was more familiar with his surroundings.³⁸

Creole slaves occupied an important position in the functioning of the plantation. What accounts for their perceived higher intelligence among white contemporaries may stem from black creole slaves' higher position in the slave hierarchy, and thus closer proximity to European culture and whiteness. They possessed a mastery of the workings of the plantation above bozals. C.L.R. James keenly delves into the complexities of this unique socio-historical context by highlighting the duality creole slaves encountered. Creole slaves' social behaviour among their peers was markedly different than when tending to the work of their masters. There was a "liveliness of intellect and vivacity of spirit" that characterized slaves born in the Caribbean.³⁹ The intellect of these slaves who debated and exchanged ideas about their social reality were not in many cases entirely contemptuous of their masters, even while expressing superiority to them privately.⁴⁰ Bonds of loyalty were held in tension with their own bondage as the creole slave "approves and condemns his master and everyone who surrounds him."⁴¹

Creole slaves worked in higher social positions—foremen of the gangs, coachmen, cooks,

butlers, maids, nurses, and other house-servants —and possessed closer relationships with their owners.⁴² These positions could present opportunities to curry favour and influence the master. The trust that came with their positions could potentially inflict serious damage to plantation owners. It enabled slaves to acquire a wide array of useful skills, but it also placed creole slaves in a position of knowledge and status on the plantation. It is important to acknowledge the social organization of the plantation life: the unique limitations and possibilities available to creole slaves'. There were both material and personal reasons for accepting the everyday violence slaves encountered; something potentially worse could result without acquiescence.⁴³ The stakes were high. Creole slaves had to contend with a range of choices unique to their position and function in the plantation social hierarchy. Ultimately, these decisions were made in an oppressive colonial setting where slaves were reorienting their lives.

In the case of Jamaica, Edward K. Brathwaite's study of creolization in the English colony over the course of fifty years (1770-1820) details a very similar process and social setting. The African-born slave population "were branded, given a new name and put under the apprenticeship to creolized slaves."⁴⁴ Their socialization into the larger slave group was necessary for introducing them not only to the rigours of work but symbols of authority.⁴⁵ Brathwaite convincingly argues creolization is "cultural action", a "force working on sections of society which encourages individuals to adopt, conform, and identify with roles in a social setting."⁴⁶

Plantation Slavery and Gender Dynamics

Another important consideration for understanding the roles of slaves on the plantation is gender dynamics. Female slaves who toiled in the Caribbean were imported in substantially less numbers than males, and planters most often placed them in the lower class of slaves who worked the fields.⁴⁷ Whereas male creole slaves could achieve a certain degree of social

mobility, women were most often either stymied, or they had to engage in practices (i.e. concubinage or exchanging sexual favours) males did not to obtain a better quality of life.⁴⁸

The experience of women creolizing adds another perspective to the quotidian oppression slaves faced as they reconstituted their lives in the colonies. Though the tragedy of slavery was a burden shared by the masses of slaves entering the Caribbean, the power structure made life for women particularly onerous.

A gendered perspective is even more crucial for understanding the cause and development of the Boca Nigua revolt. A domestic slave named Ana María became one of its chief ringleaders.⁴⁹ She was not the only female slave to play an active role either: prosecuting judges identified Feliciano, Francisca Ana Marcela, Maria Mora, and Antonia as guilty of helping barricade the main building on the plantation.⁵⁰ The women were condemned for their participation in the revolt, and neither the female leader nor contributors were spared the same punishments of male slaves.⁵¹ In this respect, the slave women of Boca Nigua encountered what many other women in the Caribbean had during the Atlantic slave trade: “Women slaves were no less immune to physical punishment than male slaves. There is no hard evidence to suggest that they were more compliant than men...The whip constituted an important element in her life.”⁵²

Creoles in the Age of Revolution

Creolization was not simply the product of power relations between white masters and black slaves, or colony and metropole; it was also shaped by consequential historical events in the Caribbean toward the end of the eighteenth century. Brathwaite shows the socio-historical process was exacerbated in Jamaica by developments in the region that prompted subject populations to confront the difference between their interests and attitudes internally, and those emanating from London. Brathwaite ties his historical study of Jamaica to a colonial setting

shaped by European metropolitan interests and those of the local planter elite. When the American Revolution occurred it especially affected Jamaica since both were English speaking colonies that relied heavily on each other for trade.⁵³ This triggered a turn to Britain on the part of Jamaica for cultural and material influence; it also raised constitutional questions about the colony's autonomy and its limited capacity to manage its own affairs. When the Haitian Revolution erupted in 1791, the above issues were no longer merely obscure; they presented an urgent demand for change.⁵⁴ Thus, creolization is typically characterized by the dichotomy of European dictates versus the colonists' locally-informed response, but it was also shaped by the internal structures of slave societies in the Caribbean and their relationships in what Brathwaite calls the Caribbean "cultural complex"⁵⁵

Revolutionary change that swept the region had an immense impact on how creolization manifested itself in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Franklin Knight summarizes: "throughout the Caribbean, the nineteenth century represented a long period of social disintegration and reconstruction."⁵⁶ Imperial ties and the system of slavery were tested; new relationships emerged during this era of rapid transformation. Whereas creoles held negative connotations initially, as we saw earlier, historical circumstances changed; creole became an attribute that was valorized.⁵⁷ Locally, populations became more politically and culturally distinct from metropolitan governing authorities. Their awareness of the changing relationship gradually became embraced and the term creole in some ways became outmoded due to the social evolution taking place. Knight explains:

The difference between Creoles and European expatriates was an ancient social one that had, by the nineteenth century, become somewhat anachronistic....The increasing sentiments of regional self-consciousness among the Creoles challenged the notion that birth in the metropolis provided inherent advantages for life in the tropics...from the end of the eighteenth century, locally born whites throughout the region were referring with pride to themselves as Creoles or Americans or designating themselves by where they lived.⁵⁸

The dynamic nature of creolization saw its meaning change over time and across the region in varying ways. Jamaica's close connection with other Anglophone colonies was shaken by the American Revolution in 1776, and later the Haitian Revolution from 1791-1804. Events in the late eighteenth century radically impacted creolization because it impelled colonial peoples to re-examine their imperial loyalties and future interests.

Power and Indigenization: Theorizing Slave and Elite Creolization

Tracing Creoles through Caribbean colonial history brings to light a sizeable obstacle to the study of creolization. Both slaves and masters indigenized in a social context once foreign to them, but with the passage of time it became their own. Caribbean societies were highly stratified, so creolization had different implications depending on one's position in the social order. Creolization in history, as Stuart Hall perceptibly notes, "always entails inequality, hierarchization, issues of domination and subalternity, mastery and servitude, control and resistance. Questions of power, as well as issues of entanglement, are always at stake."⁵⁹ For illustrative purposes, I consider two theories of creolization more closely to demonstrate the ways in which the process affected the social roles of elites and slaves. I examine Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* to discuss the political dimensions of creolization, namely, the evolution of political consciousness among elites in Latin America. I then introduce Caribbeanist Sidney Mintz's ideas on creolization, which is more contingent on cultural synthesis with the plantation as the driving force spurning new relationships between peoples. The theories approach the phenomenon in very different ways, but both provide important perspectives on the implications for how unfolding creolization was understood by elites, slaves and a free mixed-race rural population in Santo Domingo at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* is perhaps the most widely recognized work to place Creoles—defined as individuals of "pure European descent" born in the New World—at the forefront of nation-building.⁶⁰ Creoles, he argues, were the vanguard in the drive for

independence from colonial rule in the Americas during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Anderson addressed the region's anomalous experience with nationalism, an area untouched by other notable theorists of nations, and incorporated its development into a broader theoretical framework.⁶¹ His ideas are worth exploring here for the purposes of gaining a better understanding of how the meaning attached to Creole changed, and how the formation of new identities based on the purported interests of 'La Patria,' or homeland, came to break with imperial rule.⁶² His thesis continues to attract significant attention for its unique formulation of nations as an "imagined political community."⁶³ Scholarship on national identity in the Dominican Republic is indebted to this idea, or, at the very least, forced to contend with it.⁶⁴ It is an important period in the historiography of nationalism in the Americas: wars of independence began in the late eighteenth century (the American Revolution, 1776, and the Haitian Revolution 1791-1804), leading up to the Spanish American wars of independence in the first half of the nineteenth century. The historic change of native-born elites' attitudes toward the metropole is a vital but contentious aspect of creolization. It is necessary to analyze the process involving creoles' shift in attitudes toward their respective metropolises to help understand the situation in Santo Domingo at the end of the eighteenth century.

Imagined Communities set itself apart from other notable theories of nationalism by emphasizing the emotive power of nations in the modern era. Anderson argues nations are unique "cultural artefacts" that arose at the end of the eighteenth century.⁶⁵ They came available courtesy of the powerful modernizing forces, namely, secularization and flourishing print capitalism. These artefacts were refashioned into blueprints for national projects—applicable to an array of ideological and social settings, or, as Anderson calls them, 'imagined communities.'⁶⁶

The necessities of complex modern societies make familiar one-to-one contacts impossible, so citizens' awareness of each other is imagined via representations and subjective

interconnection. Anderson adds, nations are imagined as bounded entities distinguishable from others; they are sovereign, replacing the political power once the purview of monarchs; and they are characterized by horizontal social relationships.⁶⁷ The theory establishes a causal connection between creolization and nationalism; and it establishes a set of theoretical assertions about the evolution of political consciousness of elites in the Americas.

In “Creole Pioneers,” Anderson’s chapter devoted to the subject, he begins by contrasting the development of national consciousness in the Americas during the Age of Revolution with that of Europe. First, Spanish American colonies did not have to translate local vernaculars into languages of state institutions—they shared the language of empire; second, elite creoles who led the charge to independence had little affinity with the masses of subalterns who would be their new compatriots. Vast social inequalities perpetuated a reluctance on the part of elites to develop horizontal relations with their compatriots, the overwhelming majority of which were slaves and peasants.⁶⁸

Anderson maintains that colonization of the New World by Spain was organized in accordance with economic and pragmatic dictates. This meant its imperial holdings obtained a relatively self-contained character to its administrative units.⁶⁹ He looks at the way these organizations create meaning, namely, through the pilgrimages of Creole functionaries who maintain the administrative duties for the empire. The task of maintaining overseas colonies required a population familiar with the language of the state to tend to its administrative needs. Despite achieving high social status, wealth and power in the New World, creole elites were not granted equality with their European counterparts.⁷⁰ The sense of difference creole functionaries shared was accentuated by their circulation with each other in nearby colonies.⁷¹ Print capitalism made it possible for the dissemination of an interconnected world by which the imagining of territorial units as nations could emerge.⁷²

In response to the influence of Anderson’s theory of nationalism, a group of Latin

Americanists met to discuss the value of “Creole Pioneers” and *Imagined Communities* in light of their research on national identities in Latin America.⁷³ Historians insisted Anderson’s account of nationalism in the Americas lacks evidentiary support; however, literary scholars expressed an appreciation for the value of Anderson’s concept overall.⁷⁴ The main bone of contention for historians was the hasty timeline present in Anderson’s work: “Overall, Latin-America’s contemporary nation-states consolidated themselves only after 1850.”⁷⁵ This was because nation-building began after the colonial break with Spain, when the leaders who pursued independence faced the immense challenge of uniting populations from disparate socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. The horizontal bonds and the means to imagine them were simply not a reality in Latin America until it reached could modernize public institutions for the efficient economic management, the effective growth of print capitalism, and public school systems to inculcate national values.⁷⁶

While Anderson’s theory highlights the political dimensions of elite creoles’ changing sentiments in the historical process of creolization, much is left to the imagination concerning the wider population’s experience. If micro historical observation can teach us something about creolization, it is important to introduce ideas about how these processes touched the lives of individuals outside the upper echelons of society. A frame of reference for understanding creolization from below is necessary. To accomplish this task, I refer to the ideas of Caribbeanist Sidney Mintz.

An anthropologist specializing on the Caribbean, Mintz’s contributions are among the earliest to explore the historical migration and interactions of cultures in the West Indies. He contends creolization is made possible by the social organization of plantation life: the proverbial soil in which novel institutions arose to replace the cultural materials slaves lost in their capture and relocation to the colonies.⁷⁷ His account places the everyday lives of slaves at the fore, and it demonstrates how the cruel conditions in which they subsisted did not define them, nor remove

their human qualities (i.e. their capacity for love, hate, and creativity).⁷⁸ The institution of slavery permeated their social existence, yet they are not passive in history, or one-dimensional objects of oppression. Slaves imported fragments of their former cultures into their new environs where they were remade despite their subjugation.⁷⁹ This view of creolization emphasizes the process slaves underwent to produce new ways of living structured by a historically specific model of economic production and social organization.

For Mintz the plantation is the driver of creolization because it marries technologically modern production with imported, coerced forms of labour— “the joining of factory and field.”⁸⁰ The plantation structured work life for economic production, but it was also home to a sizeable slave population who, upon being forcibly imported to the colonies, remade their lives within its confines. Slaves who lost their cultural material during their transportation across the Atlantic were inducted into regimented life on the plantation. In this harsh environment, they synthesized new social institutions to replace their lost cultural materials.⁸¹ Mintz explains that creolization is about the fusion of different peoples through “creative cultural synthesis,” not simply cultural mixing.⁸² The process is historically linked to the imperial powers expanding into the Caribbean during the seventeenth century and subsequent sugar revolution described earlier. In its purest form, creolization appears amid heightened imperial competition in the Caribbean in which slave societies were founded.

Spanish colonies did not follow the same trend. Forays into slavery and nascent sugar production at the outset of the colonization of the Americas occurred early on the Hispanic Caribbean islands. Mintz notes that, for the Hispanic Caribbean, slave labour became redundant and resulted in significant numbers of slaves being manumitted.⁸³ The absence of the plantation during the initial sugar boom of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Spanish Caribbean meant their societies were racially-mixed and Caribbean-born but not necessarily creolized.⁸⁴ He explains: “The conditions that led to creolization in the Caribbean were unique,

or nearly so; and the term 'creolization' itself applies to the history of some Caribbean societies, but not to others."⁸⁵ Hispanic colonies are exceptional in comparison. Their sugar industries were underdeveloped, and therefore the same kind of social relationships found in plantations and plantation societies were missing. Thus, Mintz restricts creolization to non-Hispanic colonies due to the primacy of the plantation in his conception of the historical process. His theory remains an excellent resource for grasping creolization in the Caribbean, but it has a blind spot when it comes to the Hispanic Caribbean.

One of the central arguments Mintz makes to support the view Spanish colonies did not creolize stems from the fact they did not form pidgin/creole languages of their own. This is true, of course, but language is not the sole measure of creolization. Elsewhere Mintz summarizes this point concisely: "language is not culture, only a part of culture; it is not organized 'just like culture', but differently; and the linguistic model of creolization is a model for languages, not a homology with culture itself."⁸⁶ Mintz's theory is unable to clearly disentangle creole from creolization because cultural distinction through indigeneity—the root of creolization—is present in both. While Spanish colonies inherited languages, religion, and other cultural traits, they still inhabited a distinct colonial context where their political and social arrangements bore distinctions. Furthermore, Santo Domingo was not a self-contained unit; it shared an island with the largest plantation society and most profitable colony, St. Domingue. The socio-economic development and cultural interaction of the latter greatly impacted the creolization of former.

Mintz's overreliance on the plantation and the sugar revolution to separate the Spanish Antilles from neighbouring sugar-producing colonies understates their economic interconnectedness. Non-sugar producers developed goods for trade to areas specializing in sugar, forming circuits of economic trade relationships deeply connected to the stimulus brought on by the sugar revolution.⁸⁷ Primary among them was Santo Domingo, whose economic outlook benefited significantly from trading cattle products to its western neighbour during the

eighteenth century.⁸⁸

Both Benedict Anderson and Sidney Mintz's conceptions of creolization offer valuable frames of reference. However, the lacunae in both necessitate generating insights by submitting their ideas to microhistorical analysis. Mintz's theory cannot capture subtle nuances present in Santo Domingo by generalization alone. It was a social landscape that differed from its western neighbour, but was no doubt greatly influenced by it. Mintz's scope to identify the social structures that produce creolization in the Caribbean is too encompassing to detect the exceptional circumstance taking place in Santo Domingo in 1796.

Anderson's ideas do ring true in the sense that colonial authorities who intervened in the Boca Nigua revolt were aware of changing creole attitudes – a fact that was not lost on their decision-making in quelling the revolt (discussed in chapters 3 and 4). Santo Domingo did not pursue independence in the way or the timeline Anderson delineates. However, its people did begin to form connections and interactions in a tumultuous period of history in which political and cultural boundaries were being redrawn. A close look through a micro lens into the Boca Nigua slave revolt enables an evaluation of what Eric Hobsbawm called the “proto-national”: attachments and feelings of belonging that could be translated into a larger political arena (i.e. what would eventually become nations).⁸⁹

As indispensable as theorizing creolization is for analyzing societies from the past, it has its own set of limitations concerning the complexity and scope of the subject matter at hand.⁹⁰ A full account of creolization taking place in Santo Domingo during the Boca Nigua revolt would be tasked with deciphering the indigenization of European settlers and African slaves; regional political relationships and developments; and economic dependency on Europe. What is needed is a closer observation of the phenomenon embodied in microhistory.

The Microhistorical Approach

The works of Italian historians in the 1970s breathed new life into micro-oriented historical analysis. Made up of a disparate group from Marxist backgrounds, Italians adherents of ‘microhistoria’ did not have the financial resources to collect large sets of data with teams of social scientists (such as the French Annales School).⁹¹ Nor were they convinced the quantitative methods employed during the 1950s and 1960s in social history could truly capture marginalized voices.⁹² Encompassing narratives, most notably modernization theory, were met with increasing skepticism for being ethnocentric and teleological: undervaluing the agency of historical actors and taking for granted individual experiences by totalizing them.⁹³ Seeing larger narratives as detached, where the nuance and complexity of human experience are lost in generalizable categories, Italian microhistorians placed a high value on the qualitative study of the masses.⁹⁴ Ginzburg and Poni, for example, developed a “prosopography from below” to map social connections via individual case studies.⁹⁵

The theoretical flexibility Italians microhistorians maintained created the impression their inquiries failed to articulate a distinctive set of methodological and theoretical precepts. In the introduction to a collection of microhistorical essays, the editors' note: “microhistory came to be a particular style of work rather than any codified method, a practice rather than a doctrine.”⁹⁶ Subject areas, sources, and the objectives of microhistorical research differ, but that does not imply the approach lacks a paradigmatic perspective of the past. In the most comprehensive assessment of the theoretical elements that characterize microhistory, historian István M. Szijártó claims there are three defining features to microhistory: (1) rigorous investigation of a small, circumscribed area; (2) belief the micro lens best captures human agency; and (3) the use of the small sites to explain “great historical questions.”⁹⁷ Szijártó’s definition presents a succinct set

of principles that guide this essay and speak to microhistory's promise.

The first and most obvious attribute microhistorians have in common, as Szigjártó notes, is a preoccupation with observing the past on a small scale. And while this is seemingly uncontroversial, it carries a certain disposition toward historical knowledge. The Italian pioneers questioned prevailing epistemological assumptions by refusing to accept that subjects in history are inherently more consequential when dealt with on a grander scale. For Siegfried Kracauer, whose ideas served as a source of inspiration for the Italian microhistorians, there is a common understanding in Western thought that what is genuinely historical must conform to an intelligible and encompassing narrative:

Throughout the history of philosophy it has been held that the highest principles, the highest abstractions, not only define all the particulars they formally encompass but also contain the essences of all that exists in the lower depths. They are imagined as the 'highest things' in terms of both generality and substance.⁹⁸

Regardless of any theoretical tension that divides microhistorians into paradigmatic specific categories, there exists a fundamental agreement that which takes place outside the purview of the telescope has historical value. The growing awareness of the difference between micro and macro perspectives accompanied changes in society and academia during the 1960s. It involved the historian's relationship with what he or she is observing—their underlying disposition toward distance and power.⁹⁹ The macro perspective values distance between the historian and the object of study, asserting the power of the former to craft a singular narrative; whereas the micro is interested in establishing a more intimate connection with history.¹⁰⁰ By “changing the scale” historians can recover what falls by the wayside in macro narratives, presenting human behaviour with all its idiosyncrasies, paradoxes and nuances; in other others, painting the human past more realistically.¹⁰¹

Microhistorians recognizes the importance of anomalies in history. Outlying events and

practices by their very definition go unexamined because they do not sit comfortably with generalizations historians are compelled to make. Strange behaviours, ideas and occurrences need not be eliminated for the sake of generalization. In fact, when a historian encounters anomalies they are on the right track to unearthing deeper realities of a particular time period.

Filippo de Vivo writes:

By studying...anomalies we see alternatives which were real and possible at the time, but which often escaped institutional records or traditional histories. Shifting the point of view allows us to perceive the spaces of limited freedom that individuals could fashion for themselves, albeit at great risk to themselves.¹⁰²

The macro lens pays too little attention to the individual voices on the margins of history, specially instances that problematize generalizable qualities.

To address the theoretical challenges of relying on anomalous or obscured phenomenon, microhistorians, particularly in Italy, embraced Eduardo Grendi's concept of the "exceptional-normal."¹⁰³ It posits that exceptional documents and circumstances possess the potential to uncover concealed realities in a socio-historical context.¹⁰⁴ Instances that confound the contemporary historian, in other words, may have not been considered strange but a familiar aspect of social life. In situations where ruling classes suppress or silence in documentation, exceptional moments or documents (i.e. where their power is challenged) provide a more lucid portrayal of social relationships.¹⁰⁵

Grendi's formulation is one of the most recognizable of microhistory's strategies because it attributes importance to individual decision-making power amid the influence of social forces. His aim is to qualify deterministic or teleological claims; microhistory stresses choice because it is committed to valuing historical subjects as conscious actors. The stress on human agency reflects microhistorians' response to historiographic debates taking place during the 1970s. The dominance of the modernization narrative embodied in liberal and orthodox Marxist

theories came under increasing scrutiny for downplaying the role of conscious historical actors.¹⁰⁶ Italian microhistorians were influenced by British Marxist E.P. Thompson's approach to the study of history from below, but repudiated more orthodox interpretations of Marxist historiography as "exclusionary and univocal."¹⁰⁷ The exclusionary characteristics found in conventional macro narratives are manifest in their dismissive attitude toward individual agency, and such accounts are univocal because they avoid presenting voices of historical actors that run counter to the narrative.

Perhaps the most contested aspects of microhistory is how exceptions and agency relates to the macro. For the most part, microhistorians see the potential for connecting history's small, seemingly insignificant events to pressing historical puzzles. They look to small sites to explain history's big questions.¹⁰⁸ In this perspective, the close-up clarifies and poses potential for ascertaining how theories measure up. E.H. Carr's assertion that the use of language makes generalization in historiography inescapable is apropos: "The historian is not interested in the unique, but what is general in the unique."¹⁰⁹ Considered in this way, the micro is complementary to the macro.¹¹⁰

Microhistory and Postmodernism

Not all advocates of microhistory remain convinced of the micro-macro connection, or its usefulness as a topic of discussion.¹¹¹ The issue centers on the influence of postmodernist ideas and their adaptability to microhistorical practice. Icelandic historian Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon encourages a paradigmatic shift that he believes is found in poststructuralism.¹¹² What concerns him most is microhistorians' preoccupation with metanarratives. The benefit of microhistory for Magnússon is the closeness and detail it reveals. Overarching narratives of the past put this in jeopardy because they are constructed to conform to academic practices, incorporating large

spans of space and time. In other words, grand narratives reinforce the distance that microhistory was supposed to provide relief from.¹¹³ Historians assign what they find, groups of people included, to ascribed categories based on the predilections of prevailing power structures.¹¹⁴

There is reason to believe the poststructuralist stream of microhistory would resist creolization as a metanarrative imposed on the small scale. Magnússon, for example, calls for the “singularization of history,” a model that rejects the centrality of the metanarrative, and instead looks to closely analyze tiny, incomplete moments from the past without contextualizing them.¹¹⁵ He claims through singularization one can isolate what is under the microscope from misleading metanarratives. And yet, some form of narrative must remain. Without a set of organizing principles, theory or synthesis, what is left? As Frederic Jameson dryly observes, the death of the grand narrative itself arrives in the form of a grand narrative.¹¹⁶

Another response to the resistance to link micro with macro in postmodern thinking is found in determining historical significance. Magnússon’s conception of microhistory implies an arbitrary view of historical investigation equivalent to spinning a wheel to determine subject matter and significance. Trivial history results when the past is disconnected from analysis of macro structures. By trivial I do not mean small, for microhistorians heed Kracauer’s warning regarding the hegemony of big history; I am referring to narrative for its own sake. If metanarratives create distance, the same can be said of postmodern/poststructuralist microhistory. The detail may be rich, but its disjointed rendering drifts away from a humanist connection implied in the closeness microhistorians (such as myself) are after. Its disconnection is found in a particularistic ethos that advocates fragmentation. Thus, uncertainty taints the closeness sought in microhistory: the mere existence of disparate pieces does not make them comprehensible in substance or subject.

At first glance, creolization appears almost too multifaceted a phenomenon to be considered a grand narrative. Framed as a big story, creolization in the Caribbean refers to the interactions African slaves, European colonists, and indigenous populations engaged in to forge novel ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identities. The multifarious process necessitates analysis of theories that offer clues in the historical record. Explanatory frameworks are not accepted as Gospel truth. Instead, they suggest where a historian ought to direct their gaze as a means of altering historiographic understanding. Microhistory looks at cases from the past in an experimental way: “Examples confirm a hypothesis through accumulation, with the obvious limitations this method entails. Experiments allow us to change a particular interpretation.”¹¹⁷ The notion concepts are imposed on the findings observed through the micro lens must contend with the fact the truths unearthed are not ironclad.

Post modern variants of microhistory supply a valuable critique of microhistory worth considering when championing the viewpoint of the micro. One does not have to subscribe to Magnússon’s theoretical orientation to recognize the pitfalls of looking to small events in history as evidence of larger phenomenon. Indeed, microhistory, it can be argued, is predisposed to a kind of historiographic myopia in that more can be made out of historical fragments than warranted. The micro-macro connections made here ought to be received with a critical disposition. The tension between imposing one’s own ideological predilections on the data, on the one hand, and using theory as a guide for making history comprehensible, on the other, are not neatly resolved in this thesis; questions about the place of truth in historiography remain regardless of the insights of microhistory.

Creolization in the Caribbean came about through European colonization. Settlers from Europe and African slaves arrived in a foreign land to support the aims of the colonial project.

Their integration into the Caribbean hinged on indigenization (an element of creolization), an experience shared throughout the region. Yet, the pace of migration and the patterns of colonization in each respective colony made for different outcomes. This is especially true when Spanish dominance of the region culminated in non-Iberian powers embracing sugar production on large-scale plantations in their newly-minted colonies (e.g. Barbados and Guadeloupe). The complexity and scale involved in operating these plantations produced a social hierarchy among creole and bozals slaves with a corresponding division of labour and system of meaning.

Just as creolization varied in the colonial Caribbean, the effects differed between colonist and slave. Benedict Anderson and Sidney Mintz's ideas lend perspective on how the process affected creole elites from above and slaves from below. Anderson's theory places creolization in the development of nationalism in Latin America, highlighting the political dimensions of the process. Mintz, on the other hand, maintains creolization is cultural synthesis produced by the plantation model of production. Both assist in gaining insight into the complexity of creolization; however, they require qualification through microhistorical research.

Microhistory facilitates a way of viewing creolization as a socio-historical phenomenon constituted by structural forces and human agency. Its research agenda appreciates the value of historical knowledge left untouched by encompassing narratives. Although it rejects the way metanarratives exclude or minimize agency, microhistory seeks to explain the great questions in history. Caribbean creolization no doubts meets this criterion.¹¹⁸ I will show later (in Ch.4) the Boca Nigua revolt reveals creolization was not an impersonal force, but one shaped by individuals' interactions in a particular colonial context. What did this look like in Santo Domingo during the 1790s? The Spanish colony's creolization in the late eighteenth century was shaped by several important factors that necessitate looking more narrowly at the history of

Santo Domingo in light of the information presented here. As shown earlier, the differing patterns of colonization and the role of the plantation is integral to understanding different expressions of creolization. Focusing specifically on Santo Domingo in the next chapter, I align my analysis of the Boca Nigua with the broader evolution of creolization leading up to the social context found in the 1790s.

Notes

¹ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 46.

² Shu-mei Shih and Françoise Lionnet, "The Creolization of Theory," in *The Creolization of Theory*, ed. Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 22.

³ Jourdan, 117.

⁴ Carlo Ginzburg, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things," 15,

⁵ Charles Stewart, *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, ed. Patrick Stewart (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2006), 7, ProQuest ebrary, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ubc/reader.action?ppg=1&docID=10367563&tm=1447870415>.

⁶ Robin Cohen and Paola Toninato, "The Creolization Debate: Analysing Mixed Identities and Culture," in *The Creolization Reader: Studies in Mixed Identities and Cultures*, ed. Robin Cohen and Paola Toninato (New York: Routledge, 2010), 9.

⁷ Derek Bickerton, "Creoles, Capitalism and Colonialism," in *The Creolization Reader: Studies in Mixed Identities and Cultures*, ed. Robin Cohen and Paola Toninato (New York: Routledge, 2010), 39-40; Stuart Hall, "Créolité and the Process of Creolization," in *The Creolization Reader: Studies in Mixed Identities and Cultures*, ed. Robin Cohen and Paola Toninato (New York: Routledge, 2010), 29.

⁸ Ulf Hannerz, "The World in Creolisation," *Africa* 57 (1987): 551, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1298712728?accountid=14656>; Dominique Chancé, "Creolization: Definition and Critique," in *The Creolization of Theory*, ed. Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih, trans. Julin Everett (2011): 262, doi:10.1215/9780822393320.

⁹ Stephan Palmié, "Creolization and Its Discontents," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35 (2006): 433-56, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/25064932>; Sidney W. Mintz, "Creolization and Hispanic Exceptionalism," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 31, no.3 (2008): 251-265, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40241720>.

¹⁰ Nigel O. Bolland, "Creolisation and Creole Societies: A Cultural Nationalist View of Caribbean Social History," *Caribbean Quarterly* 44, no. 1/2 (1998): 10, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/40654019>.

¹¹ Brathwaite, XIV-XV.

¹² David Goodman, "Science, Medicine, and Technology in Colonial Spanish America New Interpretations, New Approaches," in *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*, ed. Daniela Bleichmar, Paula De Vos, and Kristin Huffine (Redwood City, US: Stanford University Press, 2008), 25.

¹³ Stephan Palmié, "The 'C-Word' Again: From Colonial to Postcolonial Semantics," in *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, ed. Patrick Stewart (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2006), 68-69, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ubc/reader.action?ppg=1&docID=10367563&tm=1447870415>.

¹⁴ Ibid., 68.

¹⁵ Bauer, 37.

¹⁶ Ibid., 39, 51.

¹⁷ Chaudenson, 5.

¹⁸ Knight, *The Caribbean, Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 35.

- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Cohen and Toninato, 4.
- ²¹ Hall, 28.
- ²² Jourdan, 117.
- ²³ Brathwaite, 297.
- ²⁴ Mintz, "Enduring Substances" 294.
- ²⁵ B.W. Higman, *A Concise History of the Caribbean* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 77.
- ²⁶ James V. Fenelon, "Genocide, Race, Capitalism: Synopsis of Formation within the Modern World-System," *Journal of World-Systems Research* 22, no. 1 (2016): 25, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5195/jwsr.2016.607>.
- ²⁷ Chaudenson, 4.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 88.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 74.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 88-89. Creoles and bozals did not necessarily share a language, yet the former were responsible for their instruction.
- ³¹ Ibid., 91.
- ³² Ibid., 113.
- ³³ B. W. Higman, "The Sugar Revolution," *The Economic History Review* 53, no. 2 (2000): 215, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2598696>.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 47.
- ³⁶ Higman, "The Sugar Revolution," 215.
- ³⁷ C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage, 1989).
- ³⁸ Ibid., 17.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 17-18.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 18.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Ibid., 19.
- ⁴³ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 32.
- ⁴⁴ Brathwaite, 298.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 296-297.

⁴⁷ Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (Kingston: Heinemann Caribbean, 1990), 33-34, <http://hdl.handle.net.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/2027/heb.02025.0001.001>.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 38.

⁴⁹ See Chapter 4.

⁵⁰ Hidalgo, digital image 10.

⁵¹ See sentencing of offenders in Chapter 4.

⁵² Bush, 42.

⁵³ Ibid., 69.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 245.

⁵⁵ Ibid., XIII.

⁵⁶ Knight, 159.

⁵⁷ Stewart, 2.

⁵⁸ Knight, 175.

⁵⁹ Hall, 29.

⁶⁰ Anderson's invocation of 'pure European descent' is highly suspect given the mixed ancestry of Iberian conquerors and miscegenation that took place during the early colonial period. Likely, he means a group of white elites with closer affective ties to Europe. Anderson, 47.

⁶¹ Miller, "The Historiography of Nationalism and National Identity in Latin America," 203.

⁶² Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 45.

⁶³ Anderson, 6.

⁶⁴ Martínez-Vergne; Candelario; Baud, "Constitutionally White,"

⁶⁵ Anderson, 4.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 6-7.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 48.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 52.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 58.

⁷¹ Ibid., 61.

⁷² Ibid., 61-62.

⁷³ See *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, ed. Sara Castro-Klarén and John Charles Chasteen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

⁷⁴ Chasteen, "Introduction: Beyond Imagined Communities," in *Beyond Imagined Communities*, X.

⁷⁵ Ibid., XVIII.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Mintz "Hispanic Exceptionalism," 258.

⁷⁸ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 32.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 18; also, see Mintz, "Enduring Substances," 302.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 298.

⁸¹ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 11-12.

⁸² Mintz "Hispanic Exceptionalism," 255.

⁸³ Ibid., 260.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 261.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 254.

⁸⁶ Mintz, "Enduring Substances," 301.

⁸⁷ Juan Giusti-Cordero, "Beyond Sugar Revolutions: Rethinking the Spanish Caribbean in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Empirical Futures: Anthropologists and Historians Engage with the Work of Sidney Mintz*, ed. Stephan Palmié, Aisha Khan, and George Baca (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 70.

⁸⁸ Pons, 87.

⁸⁹ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 46-47.

⁹⁰ Stewart, 17.

⁹¹ Carlo Ginzburg and Carlo Poni, "The Name of the Game: Unequal Exchange and the Historiographic Marketplace," in *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe*, ed. Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1991), 2.

⁹² Filippo de Vivo, "Prospect or Refuge? Microhistory, History on the Large Scale," *Cultural and Social History* 17, no.3 (2010): 387. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/147800410X12714191853427>.

⁹³ Ginzburg, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It," 21.

⁹⁴ Ginzburg and Poni, 7.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ John Walton, James F. Brooks, and Christopher R.N. DeCorse, "Introduction," in *Small Worlds: Method, Meaning, and Narrative in Microhistory*, ed. John Walton, James F. Brooks, and Christopher R.N. DeCorse (Santé Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2008), 4.

⁹⁷ Magnússon and Szijártó, 5.

⁹⁸ Siegfried Kracauer and Paul Oskar Kristeller, *History: The Last Things Before the Last*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Markus Weiner Publishers, 1995), 130.

⁹⁹ Brewer, 89.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ István M. Szijártó, "Italian Microhistory," in *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice*, Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó eds. (New York: Routledge, 2013), 20.

¹⁰² Vivo, 392.

¹⁰³ Ginzburg, Tedeschi and Anne C. Tedeschi, 33.

¹⁰⁴ Vivo, 391.

¹⁰⁵ Ginzburg and Poni, 8.

¹⁰⁶ Brewer, 96.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Szijártó, "The Periphery and the New Millennium: Questions and Answer," in *What is Microhistory?*, 74-75.

¹⁰⁹ Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Vintage, 1960), 80.

¹¹⁰ Vivo, 391.

¹¹¹ See Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, *What is Microhistory?*, chapters 5-9.

¹¹² Magnússon, "Refashioning a French Peasant," in *What is Microhistory?*, 110-111.

¹¹³ Magnússon, "New and Old Theoretical Issues: Criticisms of Microhistory," in *What is Microhistory?*, 122.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 121-131.

¹¹⁵ Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, "'The Singularization of History.'"

¹¹⁶ Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), xii.

¹¹⁷ Vivo, 392.

¹¹⁸ Certainly, the enormous waves of enslaved peoples and European migrants remaking their lives and putting down roots in the Caribbean over the course of hundreds of years qualifies as a preeminent question.

Chapter 3: The Creolization of Santo Domingo during the “Unfortunate Era”

Creolization in the West Indies involved African slaves and European colonists migrating to the region, refashioning their lives in a colonial setting, and developing local systems of meaning. Social structures and imperial-colonial political relations played a decisive role in the process. Brathwaite’s pioneering historical study of Jamaica (briefly discussed in Chapter 2) illustrates how events taking place in the Americas during the last part of the eighteenth century exacerbated creolization. Revolutions and independence wars in British North America (1776) and St. Domingue (1791-1804) had far-reaching implications for Caribbean peoples. Their conceptions of each other were re-examined vis-à-vis the issues these episodes brought to the fore: the spread of liberal ideas and prospects for slave abolition.¹

Santo Domingo experienced significant political upheaval in the 1790s. Revolution engulfed its insular neighbor, French Saint Domingue, and, following military defeat, Spain ceded the entirety of its territory on eastern Hispaniola to France in the Treaty of Basel (1795). The period is often broadly portrayed as prefigurative in the evolution of the Dominican nation, but voices of contemporaries are often eclipsed by sweeping macro narratives.² Moreover, most recent scholarship focuses on national formation post-1870, often associated with state modernization and the dictatorial reign of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930-1961).³ How preceding events, such as those unfolding in the 1790s, fit into the development of Dominican national identity remains unclear.

In this chapter, I adopt Anne Eller’s advice to broaden the research agenda to include historical “antecedents.”⁴ Through analysis of primary and secondary sources, I explore the creolization of Santo Domingo, particularly how colonial inhabitants’ interactions were influenced by the contentious politics of the decade. Revolution in St. Domingue (1791-1804)

and the Treaty of Basel (1795) contributed greatly to the creolization of Dominican society. The former devastated Santo Domingo's lucrative economic relationship with St. Domingue, and it threatened the viability of Hispanic creole elites and colonial officials' attempts to shift economic production to the plantation model. The Treaty of Basel increased slaves' prospects for emancipation by incorporating them into a side of the island where slavery had been abolished.⁵ For creole elites in the city of Santo Domingo, the treaty was received as abandonment, and they directed their anger mainly at the colony's governing officials.⁶ Santo Domingo's Archbishop depicted the turmoil as symptomatic "of this unfortunate era," and it in this milieu he chronicled the Boca Nigua uprising.⁷

I demonstrate how this period entangled various elements of the population into greater interaction with each other. The events overshadowed the decision-making of those who instigated the revolt and those who earnestly sought to bring them to justice. Stressing the wider developments elucidates the social forces and political changes that influenced the range of options available to the free, in contrast to the minimal opportunities for those enslaved. Boca Nigua's status as the largest and most productive of Santo Domingo's sugar mills signified its importance in the elite creole project to expand plantation slavery during the eighteenth century. Officials involved in quashing the revolt at the sugar mill were grappling with the repercussions of the Haitian Revolution and Treaty of Basel. Their actions were reportedly driven by the need to provide the population with an example or lesson ("escarmiento") to satisfy its expressed need for stability and security.⁸ I explain why the authorities felt the local population required a lesson, and why, amid transferring their resources off the island, colonial elites engaged in a spectacular show of force when dealing with the rebel slaves. Furthermore, I illustrate how the events of 1790s animated slave creolization by providing opportunities for resistance.

Appreciation of the macro social landscape of Hispaniola's revolutionary setting is indispensable to analyzing the creolizing forces at work in the Boca Nigua affair at the micro level. Those seeking freedom and those determined to preserve slave labour were restructuring their lives in a state of rapid flux, where social relations and cultural ties were being remade in response to changing political realities.

The significance of the Haitian Revolution and the Peace of Basel is apparent when juxtaposed with Santo Domingo's creolization over the *longue durée*. How the constitutive elements of this process, such as migration and labour practices, developed over time is crucial for evaluating what the climactic events meant for different segments of the population. The features of the colony's pre-revolutionary social structures and their role as creolizing forces in Santo Domingo help explain how elites, free peasants, and slaves responded to the revolutionary 1790s.

Creolization in the Early Colonial Era

Santo Domingo holds a pivotal place in world history as the earliest colonial settlement in the Americas. In an age of precipitous expansion, its port functioned as "maritime gateway" for Europeans entering the New World.⁹ The island was birthplace to institutions (such as the Council of Indies and the Real Audiencia of Santo Domingo) and practices (mercantilism) integral to premodern western colonialism. The first university across the Atlantic (1538) functioned as a training ground for colonial administrators whose mastery of the written text facilitated the operation of empire.¹⁰ Spanish experimentation in overseas governance, economic production and labour management on the island earned Santo Domingo the title of, in historian Richard Turits' words, "cradle of modernity."¹¹ Decimation of between ninety-four and ninety-nine percent of the indigenous population hastened the reliance on African slaves for its labour

force.¹² Economic activity in the early decades revolved around mining and sugar production, both of which entailed considerable demand for manpower, but the former was soon abandoned in favour of the latter. Ingenios (sugar mills) in Hispaniola required 80 to 100 slaves each, and with the amount of land being claimed for cultivation purposes, the demand rose sharply.¹³ An estimated forty sugar mills were operating at the height of sugar manufacturing on Hispaniola during the first century of colonization, established through loans from the Spanish monarchy.¹⁴ Their proliferation and success was largely made possible through the oversight of “major personages,” elites who ranked high in importance to the royal bureaucracy and also wielded influence among colonists.¹⁵ Without continued imperial support, however, plantation labour declined. Santo Domingo experienced considerable depopulation as colonists migrated to the terra firma (Mexico and Peru) in search of riches.¹⁶

Depopulation and Neglect: The Historic Decline of the Plantation

The economic downturn and demographic change caused by mass migration are vital to the colony’s history and creolization. The population that remained had to adapt to survive the repercussions. Slaves who worked the sugar mills had to find new uses for the skills they acquired, which meant adjusting to primitive work in cattle production dominated by a “patriarchal cattle-raising oligarchy”¹⁷ Demand for labour on these large estates, however, was insufficient.¹⁸ Here we can see what Marx described as the “original sin” of primitive accumulation, the genesis of capitalist production.¹⁹ Landowners were able to exploit the subordinate position of slaves, or “free labourers,” in “the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production.”²⁰ However, most slaves sought out life in rural areas where it was possible to exploit the woodlands—wild pigs and cattle were plentiful. Depopulation left large swaths of land available for freed and runaway slaves (cimarrones) to

access; their presence bolstered the population of the hinterlands.²¹ The historic emergence of the peasantry in the countryside fits with Sidney Mintz's conception of Hispanic creolization: it occurred alongside the dearth of the plantation model.²² Peasantries in the Caribbean, he argues, possess a dialectical relationship with plantations; the success of one destabilizes the other.²³ Insofar as a free peasantry existed as a viable option for slaves, recruiting their labour power would prove difficult, especially when Santo Domingo's elites lacked capital to invest in buying slaves.²⁴ The diminished role of the plantation is paramount. And while that does not preclude meaningful creolization in Santo Domingo, it does suggest the process occurred in a social arrangement much different than other Caribbean slave societies.²⁵ The comparatively early demise of the plantation system in Santo Domingo redefined relationships between master and slave; colony and metropole; capital and countryside.

Creolization and Distance

Social and spatial distance maintained by sizeable portions of the population from each other is a primary feature of the Santo Domingo's early creolization. The demise of sugar production gave rise to an autonomous peasantry and burgeoning informal economy. Monteros—free, mixed-race inhabitants of the country's mountainous regions—supplied goods (mainly cattle and tobacco) for exchange with pirates, traders and the buccaneers settling in western Hispaniola.²⁶ Lauren Derby argues this contraband trade between east and west over time gave rise to an “emerging proto-Dominican creole identity” since it imbued each party with a sense of identity derived from the value of the goods they produced and the lifestyles associated with them.²⁷ The west became known to the Hispanic side for items of great worth (specie, sugar and slaves), which fuelled perceptions of dominance in the east, primarily known for cattle, cacao, and tobacco.²⁸ Settlers, planters, colonial authorities, and some free people of colour believed those

engaged in the contraband trade were not genuine colonists because of their disloyalty to the “edicts, rules, restrictions, and general regulatory impositions of the Crown.”²⁹ Other residents were more enthusiastic about the illicit trade given the limitations of the monopolistic regulations imposed on them. Describing Spanish settlers’ situation, English seaman James Burney spoke of how vastness aided freebooter-montero trade: “much of Hispaniola had become desert. There were long ranges of coast, with good ports, that were unfrequented by any inhabitant whatever, and the land in every part abounded with cattle.”³⁰

Discontent over the unsanctioned trading relationships culminated in what is commonly known as “las devastaciones” (devastations) (1605-1606) when the Crown violently extirpated settlements in the north outside the margins of Spanish dominion, and relocated them closer to the centre of imperial power—its capital in the south. Nevertheless, waning imperial investment in Santo Domingo rendered it impossible for authorities to police the countryside. Distance became the enduring effect, and it was met with consternation in the capital by those who struggled to control the movements of the monteros.

Another major consequence of the plantation’s deterioration for the creolization of Santo Domingo relates to the character of slavery that replaced it. Master-slave and race relations (as shown in Chapter 2) are an indispensable part of the creolizing process. Social arrangements produced different outcomes in Caribbean societies based on the complexity and scale of plantation slavery. The lives of Santo Domingo’s slaves on ranches were vastly different than plantation work that would dominate in Caribbean slave societies in the West Indies such as Jamaica and St. Domingue. For example, by 1768 two colonies were nearly ninety percent enslaved plantation societies.³¹ In contrast, at the end of the seventeenth century approximately three quarters of Santo Domingo’s creole mixed-race populace were free.³² Close working

relationships between master and slave in Santo Domingo were intimate, akin to the initial phase of Caribbean colonization.³³ Animal husbandry and the cultivation of small-scale crops for export fostered interactions between white and blacks residents that put them in close quarters and thus mitigated the rigid hierarchical that typified plantation life.³⁴ Master and slave shared similar duties in the *hatos* (cattle ranches), travelled and lived together.³⁵ Santo Domingo's creolizing experience comes largely from rural workers engaged in cattle production. "The fact that creolisation occurred outside the plantation economy in the Dominican Republic shaped a uniquely open pattern of race and class stratification," writes Derby.³⁶

Socio-Economic Change in the Eighteenth Century

The core features of Santo Domingo's early creolization—the autonomy of its free population and the familial type of slavery practiced in the cattle industry—encountered changes in the eighteenth century that undermined their stasis. Emphasis on the exceptional character of the Dominican Republic's creolization in the countryside must account for the push by creole elites and Spanish officials' in the capital to extend the power of the state in the period. Hispanicization and the resurrection of plantation slavery became interrelated projects that preoccupied the upper social stratum.

These developments were made possible by socio-economic change and population growth accompanied by the rise in trade with the French colony (by 1697 officially recognized by Spain as belonging to France).³⁷ The French colony's transformation into the world's most profitable colony was achieved through plantation labour carried out by black slaves. But it was also made possible by the Santo Domingo's cattle and livestock trade, which fed the substantial influx of settlers and slaves.³⁸ English parliamentarian and slave trade advocate Bryan Edwards observed in his historical survey of St. Domingue, the Hispanic population of the island were able to

revive sugar production on plantations because of the horses they supplied to western planters' mills and oxen for their markets.³⁹ Santo Domingo's population saw impressive increases, especially in the last quarter of the century. Although exact numbers are difficult to ascertain, it has been reported over 40,000 thousand new people were added from 1777 to 1789.⁴⁰ Combined growth and interisland economic exchanges transformed the capital city, Santo Domingo. Dilapidated buildings showing decay from neglect were under reconstruction and new sugar plantations were established around the city.⁴¹ Ingenios around the Nigua River in the southern zone (roughly 26 kilometres from the capital), for example, were described by contemporaries as fixtures of the region.⁴² In 1783, Juan Batista Oyarzabal, manager of the Boca Nigua plantation, requested from the Crown the importation of 400 African slaves, and the Bourbon rulers supported his claim.⁴³ An English source who visited the Boca Nigua sugar mill years after the revolt, noted it appeared well-maintained, a symbol of the colony's short-lived prosperity.⁴⁴

Elite Creolization in Santo Domingo

Demographic and economic changes were pivotal in the formation of an inward-looking, creole identity fashioned by colonial elites (discussed in Ch.2). The historiography of the Dominican Republic places the birth of creolization from above in the mid-to-late eighteenth century.⁴⁵ Theologian Antonio Sánchez Valverde is widely considered to be the Dominican Republic's first noteworthy creole elite. His work *Idea del valor de la isla Española* laments the historic fate of the island, which he believed was caused by the metropole's failure to sustain the slave trade.⁴⁶ Valverde conceptualized slavery as a moral and ecclesiastical imperative, and he sought to replicate St. Domingue's model for generating economic success.⁴⁷ His work is representative of elites in the capital city's commitment to Hispanicization: the reintroduction of a proverbial golden age in the sixteenth century when royal support shared in the glory of the

colony's success.⁴⁸ Valverde was critical of past conventions such as manumissions because they created an unproductive system of social control. He noted, for example, even those nations considered champions of liberty and democracy—the United States—maintain an exclusionary racial hierarchy.⁴⁹

By the time of *Idea del valor*'s publication in Madrid (1785), creoles elites had already gained ground with the Crown as to the restrictions on the slave trade. Changes in taxation policies created incentives for investing in non-domestic slaves (e.g. exemptions for slaves used in agricultural production), and duties collected from domestic slaves were transferred to slave importers as bonuses.⁵⁰ The Bourbon rulers in Seville gave more consideration to liberalizing trade, and economic planning for the island by opening Santo Domingo's inactive ports. The 1780s marked a period of free trade in Santo Domingo that had been promised for almost two decades.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the emergence of a creole identity among the colony's elite—one concerned with the political, economic and moral affairs of the colony—was fashioned in relation to a project to expand slavery and uphold traditional values of imperial rule.

Autonomy Interrupted: Hispanicization and Coming War

The contrasting interests of rural and urban populations were already in the process of coming into closer interactions prior to the Haitian Revolution. Evidence of this is found not only in colonial elites' attempts to Hispanicize maroon (runaway slave) communities, but the latter's willingness to engage with Spanish officials.⁵² Maroon settlements on Hispaniola historically first took root in the mountainous Bahruco region that stretches to the southern border of what is today Haiti. Pelanques (Maroon communities) acted as safe havens for those resisting colonial servitude; their distance from authorities had long been problematic, conjuring images of lawless civilizations. Initially founded by escaping indigenous peoples, they quickly welcomed runaway African slaves.⁵³

The enduring autonomy of the *pelanques* over centuries began to encounter greater state encroachments during the eighteenth century. Efforts of colonists in Santo Domingo to counter *marronage* were manifested in a legal framework proposed in 1768 for establishing jurisdiction over slavery, which would eventually become the basis for the more encompassing *Código Negro Carolino* years later (1784).⁵⁴ The autonomy of maroon settlements was also made less tenable by encroachments from the French, especially as the profound rise of forced slave migrants in St. Domingue produced a deluge of escapees seeking refuge. Le Maniel, a sizeable *pelanque*, sent envoys to the capital in Santo Domingo in the 1780s to consolidate an agreement with colonial officials who aimed to anoint them royal vassals.⁵⁵

The shrewd political maneuvering of the maroons from Le Maniel and Naranjo to elude these efforts stemmed from their ability to position themselves in the ensuing Haitian Revolution and ideologies forged in the French Revolution.⁵⁶ But this is predicated on events turning out poorly for Santo Domingo's colonial officials and landowning creoles. Failure on the part of Santo Domingo's elite to reinvigorate slavery does not explain how it affected their decision-making, assessments, or determination.⁵⁷ Also, while the autonomy of the colony's outlying population is indispensable for understanding the Dominican Republic's historical evolution, the degree of distance they secured is not necessarily as rigid as suggested. Population growth and relative prosperity in Santo Domingo during the late eighteenth century emboldened colonial officials' Hispanicization of the hinterlands, which resulted in increased interactions between the autarkic peasantry and both colonial and local elites. This trend continued with the onset of the Haitian Revolution and war that brought the Hispanic population into complex political relationships in response.

The return of plantation slavery added an element to the colony's early creolization: Santo

Domingo's slave economy became hybridized, whereby new plantations in the south coexisted with the paternalism of the *hateros*. Out of a slave population ranging from twelve to fifteen thousand in 1789—approximately fifteen per cent of the total population—most were involved in cattle ranching.⁵⁸ Slaves, however, who worked the revitalized plantations in Santo Domingo should not be overlooked because their numbers were small.⁵⁹ Qualitatively, this segment of population occupied a unique position in the Santo Domingo's social world. From a microhistorical perspective, their position in Dominican society is exceptional, and as such, exploration of their lives are replete with insight into the past discounted by merely stressing the numbers.

Regional dynamics, for example, upon close inspection reveal that slavery in the south was similar in practice to Caribbean plantation societies. Martinican historian of the period, Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, underlined the divergence in the practice of slavery between Santo Domingo's capital-poor cattle-ranchers, on one hand, and slavery on sugar plantations: "in Santo Domingo's sugar mills the whip was widely used and slavery operated exactly as in other colonies."⁶⁰ The distinction is geographical—between the capital city in the southern portion of the country and its outlying regions. "Plantation life, in the south," writes Cambeira, "was marked by a clear rigidity of social barriers among masters, slaves, free Blacks, and European peons."⁶¹ This contrasted with the Cibao region which became the site of burgeoning tobacco production in the eighteenth century and white immigration: Tobacco was largely performed by creoles who had access to a significant degree of social mobility.⁶²

Onset of Revolution and the Jeopardization of the Elite Project

The eruption of political instability on the island thwarted both creole and colonial elite plans for plantation development in the east, despite the growth of slave population and the metropolitan

liberalization policy. Creole and colonial elites were drawn into the violent events that foreshadowed the massive slave revolt. In 1790, after pleading the case of St. Domingue's free blacks in Paris, distinguished racially-mixed Vincent Ogé, clandestinely returned to the Caribbean with arms, raising recruits in preparation for insurrection. After failing to best French forces on the island, he retreated across the border into Spanish territory, which tied Spanish colonial forces to the revolutionary politics reverberating from Europe to the island.⁶³ Governor of Santo Domingo and key player in quelling the Boca Nigua revolt, Joaquín García y Moreno, declared: 'Ogé was not only head of the sedition of the people of color of its towns, but also of ours.'⁶⁴ Colonial officials in Santo Domingo were compelled to honour its end of the Treaty of Aranjuez (1777)—an agreement formalized by the respective territories of Spain and France which maintained provisions for the extradition of runaway slaves. Ogé was executed upon extradition by Spanish authorities.⁶⁵ The episode marks the onset of revolution in the western part of the island and the introduction of a series of potent challenges to Santo Domingo's elite.

Ensuing conflict continued to bring various segments of the population into closer interactions. Governor García y Moreno placed the military forces in the colony under high alert, reorganizing them into northern and southern units in the year of Ogé's capture.⁶⁶ With plantations in the northern plain of St. Domingue engulfed in flames by 1791, Santo Domingo's officials had to deal with new political actors and realities in the complex and often contradictory matrix of radical politics gripping the island. The situation was made worse by the tension in Europe over the repercussion of the French Revolution, most notably how Bourbon Spain would respond. Colonial authorities in Santo Domingo were pressed by the divergence between the needs of the island, on one hand, and on the other, far-away metropolitan rulers removed from the immediacy needed to address the spread of revolutionary fervor. When Spain invaded the

south of France in 1793, Santo Domingo became a theatre of war. Colonial elites opted for a course of engagement with slave rebels in St. Domingue; an unconventional pact between black slave generals and elites official in the Spanish east was born.

Revolution in St. Domingue was a major threat to creolization project crafted by elites; it effectively halted the slave trade on its shores and caused white migration.⁶⁷ However, the society they imagined was not yet beyond recovery. Slave militants in the north constructed a significant degree of autonomy in which a “black-dominated society” arose under the leadership Jean Francois and firebrand Georges Biassou.⁶⁸ The generals of the revolt developed their own policies, military tribunals and ranks.⁶⁹ Authorities in Santo Domingo attempted to persuade Biassou and Francois to reclaim the entire island for Spain, believing they could serve to destabilize French presence on the island.⁷⁰ To bolster the war effort, colonial officials undertook a “daring experiment” to recruit black insurgent slaves as troops to assist the fight.⁷¹

Signifying both these groups importance to Spanish imperial strategy, they were to be handsomely rewarded regardless of the potential economic ruin of the colony. Governor García y Moreno declared to the Duke of Alcúdia,⁷² his superior, that there was insufficient money to maintain his responsibilities, a monetary pittance, he surmised, compared to other viceroyalties.⁷³ Yet, in this same letter he requests from the Duke gold medals for rebel leaders (including a rising military figure he refers to as Toussaint Louverture, “buen negro”), and silver medals for black auxiliaries.⁷⁴ In the summer of 1793 French Commissioner Léger-Félicité Sonthonax curtailed the practice of slavery in the northern plain of St. Domingue to convince rebel slaves their interests could be met through reconciliation with the French commissioners. The French stance on abolition was enough to persuade Toussaint Louverture to abandon the Spanish in

favour of abolitionist France.⁷⁵ Still, the financial burden born on the colonial authorities to continue funding armed rebels was enormous. The auxiliaries work in 1795 cost:

[Near] \$4,000 (USD) per month for about 190 officers. Jean-François' monthly salary was \$350. Colonels were paid \$20 to \$30; captains, \$15, approximating skilled artisans' wages. Rank and file soldiers qualified only for rations, paid in cash at the rate of \$7.5 per month.⁷⁶

The inability of the Spanish to impose their will on the black revolutionary leaders, despite providing them with weapons and financial resources, indicates the autonomy rebels attained.⁷⁷ It also reveals the consequences of the course elites embarked on. Their alliance was considered a bulwark against the spread of abolitionism. And yet, the year governor García y Moreno was to give the rebel slave generals medals celebrating this pact, France's National Convention finalized abolition in its colonies. Worry enveloped Santo Domingo as their feared former ally Toussaint Louverture turned his arms against them.⁷⁸ The French stance undermined Spanish colonial elites' strategy, but it also made it more difficult to control the social interactions between populations on the island. As hostilities wore on, the governor's concern over rumors of French collaboration and the general fickleness of his subjects took the form of a heavy-handed proclamation making communication with the French ("malvados representantes") punishable by death. He went so far as to specify extra roadside gibbets had been erected in the most densely populated areas for this purpose.⁷⁹

Treaty of Basel, 1795: Evacuation, Abolition and Abandonment by the Crown

Spain's loss at the hands of revolutionary France had a prodigious impact on Santo Domingo. Due to a turn of events largely outside their control—the Haitian Revolution and Spain's loss in war to France—the experience of Santo Domingo's elites was dissimilar to the creoles described by Benedict Anderson. They did not pursue independence through war or revolution as a means of nation-building. The creole elites in Latin America who wrested their independence from

European powers at the start of the nineteenth century imagined a political arrangement free of imperial control, and second-rate status. Creole elites in Santo Domingo, on the other hand, were critical of the metropole but their creolization was intimately bound to royal support. They were unable to contemplate self-sufficiency in the way Jamaican rulers were when the American Revolution elicited local sentiment. Spain withdrew from Santo Domingo on its own accord, without revolution or war over independent statehood. Creole elites in the colony were observers in the evacuation and transference of power to France.

Removal of the political authority from which elite creolization had depended placed colonial authorities in a precarious position since they had to comply with Spanish dictates while governing the colony in line with the interests of locals who remained. Chief among the latter group's concern was the relocation of slaves. The metropole's cession of the colony came with the directive to vacate the island within one year and withdraw "their property" along with that of the Crown's assets, as per article nine of the treaty.⁸⁰ Permission to remove property became problematic when governor of Saint-Domingue, Etienne Laveaux, issued a decree in 1795 prohibiting the application of the provision to slaves. Since slavery was not recognized by French law in the Caribbean at the time, slaves could not be counted as property. The inability to bring their property to new destinations gave slave-owners an added incentive to stay behind.⁸¹ Those who did had to contend with the ambiguous legality of slavery. Cession suggested slavery was outlawed due to amalgamation under a singular French abolitionist regime.⁸² Because French troops were delayed in taking Santo Domingo, however, slavery continued, and this reality had grave implications for the future of the colony's free and enslaved populations.

The evacuation of the colonial institutions that sustained slavery in the heightened state of turmoil on the island signified insecurity about slavery's durability. Father Torres,

Archbishop of Santo Domingo, was informed he must vacate the island for Havana, along with the Real Audiencia and the garrison of troops in a prompt manner.⁸³ This intimated to creole landowners they were losing their last line of defense: unable to take slaves abroad, nor own them at home, and without Spanish political backing, their economic ruin was imminent. Colonial authorities felt the weight of their urgency when dealing with the competing interests between local and imperial. Their swift evacuation was hampered by issues arising from emancipation, cultural and religious protection for the Hispanic residents who would become French citizens. Moreover, colonial officials had already raised expectations prior to the Treaty of Basel by their responsiveness to elites on the other side of the country who requested official military protection for their people and their wealth (including slaves) in Monte Plata.⁸⁴ Despite the Governor's desire to see a speedy evacuation, his office often took actions that made this difficult. Following the Treaty of Basel, Santo Domingo's government rejected St. Domingue's multiracial envoy as offensive because the delegation promulgated abolition throughout the territory.⁸⁵ If his intention was to complete his duties and return to Spain, why did García y Moreno take the opposite route? Why engage in provocative political acts such as harbouring French emigrants, or rejecting St. Domingue's emissaries?⁸⁶ The answer is crucial to understanding the intricacies of Santo Domingo's creolization and colonial authorities' motivations when they responded to the Boca Nigua revolt the following year. Governor Joaquín García y Moreno was compelled to, by the response from creole elites, who believed they were abandoned by the Crown.

Archbishop Outlines Public Reaction to the Abandonment of the Crown

Archbishop of Santo Domingo Portillo y Torres, who would go on to serve as one of the few

to document the Boca Nigua revolt, captured people in the city of Santo Domingo's reaction after the treaty. His instructions were to prepare the ecclesiastical orders to vacate the island, a prospect that greatly appealed to him. But he ran into resistance from local clergymen who felt they had more to gain by remaining.⁸⁷ Rumours of their refusal to depart circulated the Caribbean, as British sailors coming from port observed: "The religious orders, not relishing much of the idea of a French government, had many of them arrived there."⁸⁸ When news of the cession was made through an official publication, the public hostility to Spanish withdrawal concerned the Archbishop.⁸⁹ In a letter to Spanish statesmen Eugenio de Llaguno and Amírola, he explains peoples' response to the Treaty as shock and dismay—the impact so great, their resolution and mood so vigorous, he placed it on an equal footing with Spain's own political determination.⁹⁰ So alarming their opposition, the Monseigneur feared subversion. He noted that it appeared convenient to allow time to pass to relief the patriotic fervor ("pasion Patriotica ") clouding their judgement.⁹¹ Such rash and impassioned actions, argued the Archbishop, had the power to overwhelm denizens opposed to "more exquisite politics" ("mas exquisita politica ").⁹²

Spanish withdrawal from Santo Domingo stoked fears that the political, linguistic and cultural differences among the Hispanics would be persecuted. Many, according to the Monseigneur, were particularly afraid of meeting the guillotine, an instrument born out of the French Revolution.⁹³ This fear, he believed, was the beginning of insurrection. He writes to the metropole, "no doubt your excellency [the treaty] introduces them to defencelessness (pecho descubierto) that risks life and all."⁹⁴ The Archbishop believed the common people ("gente del Común") who stayed in colony misunderstood the treaty—their expressions of abandonment misguided.⁹⁵ The prominent voice in the opposition was identified as the landowning ranchers who were intent on pointing out the mistakes of the Crown.⁹⁶ Anger was directed at the local

authorities representing the king on the island, the monarchy itself: landowners were preoccupied with the poor management of the colony, particularly the chief of the audiencia courts and the governor, which drove the king to abandon his possession, once so pivotal to the Americas.⁹⁷

The Need for Appeasement

Colonial authorities' loss of the population's favour was troubling enough to prompt their need to appease locals who they feared would turn on them. To ease the blow of separation, the Archbishop advised he would need resources to build schools and fix the diocese (he finds in the state of "unspeakable disaster").⁹⁸ Achieving a state of peace after so much hardship would require the Crown to restore financial assistance since war depleted the Royal Treasury.⁹⁹ The Archbishop used his own non-existent stipend as proof of the impoverishment of the colony and obstacles he was facing.¹⁰⁰ Absence of imperial provisions and the dual effect of making Santo Domingo more vulnerable to slave revolt ("una multitud rebelde que nos oprimiera") and revolution among creoles devastated by Spain's departure.¹⁰¹

Amid mass anger over the Crown's ability to provide ongoing security and stability, the heads of Santo Domingo's dwindling institutions—the governorship, Church, and imperial courts (i.e. Real Audiencia de Santo Domingo)—had to formulate a response to revolt at the largest sugar mill in the country, Boca Nigua. Intent to instill public order and reassure the anxious masses, especially in the capital, colonial authorities understood their reaction as serving "escarmiento" (warning, lesson or example). Judge Don José Antonio de Vrizar of the Real drew the connection in his report on the Boca Nigua affair between building "public satisfaction" with the response to the slave revolt; he called it an exemplary lesson ("exemplar escarmiento") that lessened fears in the capital.¹⁰² The judge also commented on the locals' cry for ferocious punishment to serve as an example commensurable with the great offence the slaves had carried out.¹⁰³ Governor García y Moreno believed the "lesson" bound capital and

countryside in a vigilant caution, a solidarity between Boca Nigua's local plantation manager Oyarzabal and monteros against the rebellious slaves.¹⁰⁴

The revolutionary 1790s are an important moment in the creolization of Santo Domingo. Historically, the process was informed by the absence of social structures (i.e. the plantation) constitutive of the phenomena in other West Indian colonies such Jamaica and St. Domingue. Demise of the plantation in the late sixteenth century produced significant social distance between countryside and capital. It also gave way to a paternalistic form of slavery in cattle ranching in which master-slave relations were less hierarchical, more familial. Socio-economic change in the eighteenth century undermined these longstanding historical currents, however, and brought divergent elements of the population into greater interaction. Population growth and prosperity were boon to local elites who forged their creole identity in Hispanicization and the resurrection of plantation slavery. This project expanded the reach of creole elites and Spanish officials; highlighted regional dynamics between the south and the rest of the country; and showed how the variables of creolization (i.e. social structures) in Santo Domingo hybridized. With its population divided into different forms of work relationships Santo Domingo makes an interesting case that problematizes theoretical insights explored in chapter 2, particularly Sidney Mintz's notion that the dearth of the plantation was concurrent with genuine creolization.

The Haitian Revolution continued to bring various segments of the population together. To safeguard the institution of slavery and the virtues of the creole elite project, black insurgent slaves were recruited as troops with the prospect they might seize the entire island for the Spanish Crown. This gamble unravelled when the French introduced abolition. Panic amongst creole elites and colonial authorities who feared slave conspiracies with French set in. The

Treaty of Basel made it publicly known Spain was abandoning the island to the French. The extirpation of Spanish political influence which nurtured elite creolization put colonial authorities at odds with locals. The public, especially landowners, blamed local authorities for the ruinous state of the colony. To allay social tension colonial officials sought to provide the population with a lesson when they sent troops along the Nigua River to subdue the mill's rebelling slaves. What they found there, when finally accounting for the revolt's underlying causes and assessing the actions of the slaves, was a microcosm of Santo Domingo's creolization. It is the subject of the next chapter, to which we now turn.

Notes

- ¹ See Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s."
- ² Matibag, 8; Cambeira, 136-141.
- ³ Martínez-Vergne; Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*; Mayes; Candelario; Derby, *The Dictator's Seduction*.
- ⁴ Eller, 82. The suggestion echoes early thinker of nationalism John Stuart Mill when he noted the coalescence of divergent social groups into nations hinges on past political relationships. Mill, 427.
- ⁵ Johnson, 59.
- ⁶ Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre cesión*, digital image 2.
- ⁷ In the original Spanish: "de esta infausta epoca." Ibid.
- ⁸ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 2.
- ⁹ B.W. Higman, *A Concise History of the Caribbean*, 88.
- ¹⁰ Angel Rama, *The Lettered City* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 29.
- ¹¹ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 25.
- ¹² Fenelon, 25.
- ¹³ Marlin D. Clausner, *Rural Santo Domingo: Settled, Unsettled, and Resettled* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), 42-43.
- ¹⁴ Carlos Andujar, *The African Presence in Santo Domingo* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 2012), 31.
- ¹⁵ Juan Bosch, *Social Composition of the Dominican Republic*, trans. Christopher Winks (New York: Routledge, 2106), 38.
- ¹⁶ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 25.
- ¹⁷ Bosch, 50-51.
- ¹⁸ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 17.
- ¹⁹ Karl Marx, "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation," *Capital Volume 1* in *The Portable Marx*, ed., trans. Eugene Kamenka (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), 462.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 463.
- ²¹ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 29.
- ²² Sidney Mintz, "Reflections on Caribbean Peasantries," *New West Indian Guide* 57, no.1/2 (1983): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41849103>.
- ²³ Mintz contends: "the peasant and plantation sectors are not two separate and parallel adaptations, but are linked dialectically; and the opportunities for the expansion of the plantation sector are actually affected by peasant successes, the management of family labor, and other factors lying partially outside plantation control." Ibid., 7.
- ²⁴ Derby, *The Dictator's Seduction*, 13.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Manuel Vicente Hernández González, "The Monteros and the Guerreros," in *The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, Eric Paul Roorda, Lauren H. Derby and Raymundo González, eds. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 93.

²⁷ Lauren Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value," 8.

²⁸ Ibid., 12.

²⁹ Cambeira, 99.

³⁰ James Burney, *History of the Buccaneers of America* (London, 1816), 34-35, Sabin Americana. Gale, <<http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY101278350&srchtp=a&ste=14>>, (accessed March 15, 2017).

³¹ John Garrigus, "Saint-Domingue's Free People of Colour and the Tools of Revolution," in *The World of the Haitian Revolution*, David Patrick Geggus and Norman Fiering eds. (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 51.

³² Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 30.

³³ Robert Chaudenson argues Santo Domingo and other Hispanic colonies remained in the "homestead phase." See Chaudenson, 133.

³⁴ Lauren Derby, *The Dictator's Seduction*, 13.

³⁵ Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value," 19.

³⁶ Ibid., 36.

³⁷ Pons, 89.

³⁸ Franco, 56.

³⁹ Bryan Edwards, *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo...* (London: J. Stockdale, 1797), 178. Sabin Americana, Gale, UBC Library, <http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/servlet/Sabin?vrsn=1.0&dd=0&af=RN&locID=ubcolumbia&srchtp=a&d1=SABCP04522600&c=1&an=SABCP04522600&ste=11&stp=Author&dc=flc&d4=0.33&docNum=CY103018763&ae=CY103018763&tiPG=1>, (accessed March 12, 2017).

⁴⁰ Relying on parish records compiled by French planter Moreau de Saint-Méry, Dominican scholar Franklin J. Franco charts these increases. Franco, 55. Also, see Clausner, 68; Antonio J. Pinto, "Santo Domingo's Slaves in the Context of the Peace of Basel: Boca Nigua's Black Insurrection, 1796," *Journal of Early American History*, vol. 3 (2013): 134, doi.10.1163/18770703-00301001.

⁴¹ Pons, 87.

⁴² Valverde, 35; 121.

⁴³ Christina Violeta Jones, "Revolution and Reaction: Santo Domingo during the Haitian Revolution and Beyond, 1791-1844" (PhD diss. Howard University, 2008), ProQuest, (3307982), 47-48, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/89251078?pq-origsite=summon>.

⁴⁴ William Walton, *Present State of the Spanish Colonies ...* Vol.1 (London: H. Byer, 1810): 38, Sabin Americana, Gale,
<http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY112218110&srchtp=a&ste=14>.

⁴⁵ Cassá, 388-389.

⁴⁶ San Miguel, 9.

⁴⁷ Valverde, 154.

⁴⁸ San Miguel, 10.

⁴⁹ Valverde, 168.

⁵⁰ Franco, 55.

⁵¹ Clausner, 68-69.

⁵² Charlton W. Yingling, "The Maroons of Santo Domingo in the Age of Revolutions: Adaptation and Evasion, 1783–1800," *History Workshop Journal* 79, no. 1 (2015): 25-51, doi. 10.1093/hwj/dbv010.

⁵³ Alvin O. Thompson, *Flight to Freedom: African Runaways and Maroons in the Americas* (Kingston, JM: University of the West Indies Press, 2006), 96-97, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ubc/detail.action?docID=10342252> (accessed Feb. 5, 2017).

⁵⁴ Legislation that emulated the French slave jurisprudence enshrined in the Code Noir. Ana Hontanilla, "Sentiment and the Law: Inventing the Category of the Wretched Slave in the Real Audiencia of Santo Domingo, 1783–1812," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 48, no 2 (2015): 184, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ecs.2015.0008>.

⁵⁵ Yingling, 32.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁷ Clausner, 72.

⁵⁸ Graham T. Nessler, "'They Always Knew her to be Free': Emancipation and Re-Enslavement in French Santo Domingo, 1804-1809," *Slavery & Abolition* 33, no.1: 100, doi:10.1080/0144039X.2011.603490, see footnote 9. Graham T. Nessler, "The Shame of the Nation": The Force of Re-Enslavement and the Law of 'Slavery' under the Regime of Jean-Louis Ferrand in Santo Domingo, 1804-1809," *New West Indian Guide* 86, no.1/2 (2012): 7, <http://www.kitlv-journals.nl/index.php/nwig/index>.

⁵⁹ Exact numbers of the breakdown between plantation slaves in Santo Domingo and others is unavailable. Nevertheless, scholars

⁶⁰ Fumagalli, 36.

⁶¹ Cambeira, 116.

⁶² Ibid., 112.

⁶³ Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*, 38.

⁶⁴ Joaquín García y Moreno, quoted in Jones, 67.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 68.

⁶⁶ Pons, 98.

⁶⁷ Turits, 38.

⁶⁸ Jeremy D. Popkin, *A Concise History of the Haitian Revolution* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 48.

⁶⁹ James, 94; Popkin, 49.

⁷⁰ Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s," 140.

⁷¹ David Patrick Geggus, "The Exile of the 1791 Slave Leaders: Spain's Resettlement of its Black Auxiliary Troops," *Journal of Haitian Studies* 8, no 2 (2002): 52, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/41715135>.

⁷² Manuel de Godoy was a powerful Spanish statesman, later prime minister. He is commonly referred to as the "prince of peace" due to his role as chief negotiator of Treaty of Basel. The duke was also recipient of reports on the Boca Nigua revolt.

⁷³ Joaquín García y Moreno, *Noticias de la parte francesa de Santo Domingo*, January 3, 1794, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI/21.1.16, ESTADO, 14, N.89, ES.4109, digital image 8, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 20, 2017).

⁷⁴ Ibid., digital image 4. Not long after, he expressed gratitude for the receipt of the medals, acknowledging gold stars for Juan Francisco, Biasou and Toussaint Louverture, and silver stars for the leaders of the black auxiliaries. See Joaquín García y Moreno, *Gobernador Santo Domingo acusa recibo correspondencia*, February 18, 1794, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI/21.1.16/ESTADO, 14, N.86, ES.41091, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 20, 2017).

⁷⁵ James, 143.

⁷⁶ Geggus, "The Exile of the 1791 Slave Leaders," 53.

⁷⁷ Popkin, 55.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 99.

⁷⁹ Joaquín García y Moreno, *Pena de muerte a los que tengan correspondencia con enemigos*, September 19, 1794, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI/21.1.16/ESTADO, 14, N.83, ES.41091, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 20, 2017).

⁸⁰ Manuel de Godoy, *Memoirs of Don Manuel de Godoy*... ed., trans. Lt. Colonel J. B. d' Esménard (London: R. Bentley, 1836), 411-412, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101007796814;view=image;seq=425;page=root;size=100;orient=0>.

⁸¹ Johnson, 59; Franco, 60; 61-64.

⁸² Nessler, "The Shame of the Nation," 8.

⁸³ Fernando Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo acusa recibo oficio*, October 18, 1795, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI/21.1.12, ESTADO, 11A, N.18, ES.41091, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 25, 2017).

⁸⁴ Joaquín García y Moreno, *Sobre personas que se han pasado a la plaza de Bayajá*, February 21, 1794, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI/21.1.16/ESTADO, 14, N.85, ES.41091, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 25, 2017).

⁸⁵ Pinto, 135-136.

⁸⁶ Joaquín García y Moreno, *Gobernador Santo Domingo sobre franceses emigrados*, October 10, 1795, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI, 21.1.6. ESTADO, 5B, N, 113, ES.41091, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 25, 2017).

⁸⁷ Pons, 103.

⁸⁸ *True Briton* (London, England), "Kingston, Feb. 2," April 21, 1796, Iss. 1036, 17th-18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers, Gale Document Number Z2001558834, <http://find.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca>, (accessed February 25, 2017).

⁸⁹ Referred to as "Común de estas Gentes," in Fernando Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre cesión de la isla a franceses*, digital image 1.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid., digital image 2.

⁹⁴ Ibid, image 2-3.

⁹⁵ Ibid., image 3.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., image 3.

⁹⁸ Ibid., image 4-5.

⁹⁹ Ibid., image 7.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., image 6.

¹⁰¹ Fernando Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, January 1, 1797, letter, MECD, PARES, AGI, 21.1.13, ESTADO, 11B, N.59, ES.41091, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 25, 2017).

¹⁰² Hidalgo, digital image 1-2.

¹⁰³ Ibid., digital image 7.

¹⁰⁴ Joaquín García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 1.

Chapter 4: Creolization and the Boca Nigua Revolt

Socio-political change during the late colonial period had significant consequences for the creolization of Santo Domingo. Spain's scheduled withdrawal and the impending incorporation of eastern Hispaniola into St. Domingue raised uncertainties about the future among its Hispanic inhabitants. The Haitian Revolution's persistence postponed French rule in the east, putting questions about abolition and the transition on hold.¹ Santo Domingo's slaves, however, were growing restless. In 1793, the town of Hinche in the borderlands became the site of a minor slave revolt. The incident amounted to little; the accused, a free black man, was cleared of any wrongdoing.² Two years later, three white French provocateurs stirred-up a diminutive rebellion to emancipate slaves in Samaná, resulting in their execution along with several slaves.³

Circumstances in 1796 were increasingly tense. Spanish influence was disintegrating as per the terms of the Treaty of Basel. Colonial authorities were tasked with evacuating colonials while governing a discontented population who accused them of achieving peace through 'tears of blood.'⁴ The colonial government kept a watchful eye on the susceptibility of the slave population in the east to revolutionary ideas emanating from St. Domingue; French agitators had already begun travelling to plantations in the east spreading news of emancipation.⁵ In the fall of 1796, these issues came to a head when political authorities in the capital learned slaves seized the largest refinery in Santo Domingo, Hacienda de Boca Nigua.

In this chapter, I apply a micro lens to the Boca Nigua revolt to gain a more comprehensive view of how the historical actors involved, and the social context in which it emerged, were shaped by creolization. Microhistorical analysis of the event reveals creolization was a mitigating influence on both those who initiated the uprising and those who sought to suppress it,

albeit in different ways. Both were in the process of redefining their identities within the confines of changing socio-political realities.

In the first section, I delineate the cause of the revolt and its development from conspiracy to armed insurrection. A micro perspective illuminates how creolization influenced slave rebels' decision-making throughout the revolt. The instigator was compelled to retaliate against his white superiors because of his role in the plantation social hierarchy. Like other slave leaders who became involved in the plot, he utilized his position to plan and execute the uprising. I argue creolization framed options and possibilities for the slave leaders of the revolt, but ultimately they were agents of their own destinies.

In the second section, I explore the colonial government's response to the revolt, and how it too was shaped by creolization. Officials' swift action and the resources they invested dealing with the revolt demonstrates how real their perception of the threat was. Their fear of the slaves actions stemmed from the belief the capital would be overrun by revolutionaries, as it had in St. Domingue. Micro analysis shows this concern ran deeper. Officials sought to keep their relationship with the local population from worsening, and so they intended to demonstrate their hold on political order. Assisted by monteros—a roaming peasantry who subsisted autonomously in the countryside—in the apprehension of the offenders, colonial elites used the sentencing and execution of the rebels as a lesson in deterrence for unruly slaves. For creole residents in Santo Domingo, it was one of reassurance. The slave and elite experiences with creolization are brought to life through microhistorical analysis. I show the Boca Nigua slave revolt is a medium for understanding the complex socio-historical process of creolization unfolding in Santo Domingo during the late colonial period, typified by new social interactions and the spectre of revolutionary abolitionism.

Primary Sources

Before delving into the revolt it is imperative to consider the sources who recorded it. There are four primary accounts detailing the event: (1) judge Manuel Bravo accompanied the military contingent sent to Boca Nigua to restore order; (2) Regent of the Audiencia José Antonio de Vrizar (and the court's scribe Jose Francisco Hidalgo writing on behalf of the Audiencia) presided over the juridical process involved in sentencing and punishing rebel slaves; (3) governor Joaquín García y Moreno directed political affairs and oversaw the executions of the sentences pronounced by the court; and (4) Archbishop Fernando Portillo y Torres offered his commentary in correspondence to the metropole on a range of current events.⁶ All the accounts were produced by colonial authorities in Santo Domingo reporting in their official capacities to the Prime Minister of Spain and chief negotiator of the Peace of Basel, Manuel de Godoy. Most of the authors were directly involved in the affair—either by way overseeing the military expedition or the trial that followed. As representatives of the colonial elite, they present the views of ardent royalists antagonized by the French Revolution. Though united in their allegiance to the Crown and ideological opposition to revolutionary ideas, when it came to the Boca Nigua revolt colonial officials' reports were not uniform. The purpose, style and opinions found in each respective document varies. The benefit of micro-level analysis is the ability to detect these individual perspectives within their respective social groups.

There is an unfortunate downside to the historical records insofar as there are no written sources on the revolt produced by creoles and/or slaves. This gap ought to be considered when forming judgements about how they responded to the revolt since the absence of source material confronts attempts to gain a more complete account of what transpired. However, lack of documents produced by creoles and slaves does not result in their experience being wholly

inaccessible. The close observation afforded by a micro perspective reveals the influence of the local public in the capital city (especially elite creole landowners) on colonial officials' approach to the uprising.⁷ The absence of creole sources is partially compensated by analysis of the documents guided by the theoretical and historical features of creolization in Santo Domingo outlined in the previous chapters. It does not provide as much detail about this segment of the population but confirms their concerns were at the forefront of how the revolt was handled by the colonial government.

The source documents are also absent of direct testimonies from slave participants.⁸ Gauging slaves' intentions is difficult because they were interpreted through the worldviews of colonial elites. In the investigation that followed the outbreak of violence, Manuel Bravo heavily relied on the eyewitness testimonies of slaves to identify the culprits and bring them to justice.⁹ He claimed ninety-seven slaves were interviewed for this purpose, and a translator was supplied.¹⁰ Whether the testimonies were recorded or still exist is unclear. Even if the accounts were uncovered the problem of accessing the motives of the slave remains. The power imbalance between the judge and the subordinate position of the defeated slaves would affect the quality of their statements. To gain a glimpse into the intentions of the slaves, I supplement the assessments of primary sources with theoretical insights and comparative analysis drawn from St. Domingue. The structures of the two colonies' economies were vastly different, reflected in their respective social features, which makes it comparison difficult. Yet, they shared an insular relationship with one another that made it possible for two different peoples to define themselves on the island. Boca Nigua was exceptional in Santo Domingo as the primary site of production in an industry less commonly practiced in the colony; its plantation structure was like those found in St. Domingue.¹¹

The Origins of the Boca Nigua Revolt

At dawn on October 30, 1796 startling news arrived in the capital city of Santo Domingo. Two black slaves trekked approximately 28 kilometers to notify city authorities the Boca Nigua mill had been seized by armed slaves and the life of overseer Don Juan Oyarsabal was in danger.¹² The messengers explained they were eyewitnesses who barely escaped with their lives after refusing to participate in the malaise.¹³ The refinery was well known in the capital as the largest site of sugar cultivation by blacks in the colony, and Governor García y Moreno boasted of its operation as the most efficient plantation on the entire island.¹⁴ Hacienda de Boca Nigua was also distinguished by its garrison, armed with cannons to deter pirates.¹⁵ Absentee owner, nobleman Marques de Yranda, entrusted its management to Oyarsabal, his nephew. A mid-sized plantation compared to Jamaica and St. Domingue, the number of slaves residing at Boca Nigua numbered approximately 200, mostly male with some women and children.¹⁶ Despite their smaller numbers, women played a significant part in the revolt both as leaders and accomplices, and they received the same punishments imposed on males.

Given Don Juan Oyarsabal's business dealings in Le Cap, St. Domingue, it is likely he imported the creole and bozal (slaves born in Africa) from the west.¹⁷ A precise breakdown is difficult to ascertain. Close inspection of the historical documents, however, sheds light on the creole-bozal cleavage found in plantation life. The list of rebel slaves sentenced by the Audiencia contains many surnames registered as "Criollo," which implies they held this distinction. Owners assigned names to slaves based on certain defining features. These include their occupation on the plantation (Antonio Carretero/Cartwright); cultural affiliation (Jose Yngles); geographic origin (Tomás Congo); and local or foreign status (Copa Bozal).¹⁸ The authors of the documents never specify the birthplaces of slaves. But they do reveal a hierarchy existed amongst slaves at

Boca Nigua analogous to plantations in the West Indies.¹⁹ The status of creoles was attached to their function, which held meaning in slaves' lives.

Francisco Sopó and the Role of the Slave Driver

The genesis of the revolt stems from social relationships intrinsic to plantation life—the central driver of slave creolization in the Caribbean, as we saw in the works of Mintz.²⁰

The four chroniclers of the revolt claim a slave named Francisco Sopó instigated a conspiracy to kill the whites of Boca Nigua. Though sources are silent on his origins, there are many indicators he was locally-born. One of the defining traits of creole slaves in the plantation social world was their higher social position in the slave hierarchy. As shown in chapters 2 and 3, when sugar plantation development reached a point of growth in scale and complexity beginning in the seventeenth century, slaves born in the colonies received better work duties, and were often placed in leadership roles over bozals (African-born slaves). The Archbishop calls Sopó “El Dispensero” (the Steward) and notes the manager Juan Oyarsabal looked upon with him “great confidence,” placing him closer to white, European sphere of cultural influence than others.²¹ The title of steward signifies his role was akin to a slave driver—a translation favoured by secondary accounts of the uprising.²² Drivers performed a critical function in plantation social life. They occupied the highest tier in the hierarchy amongst slaves, and they were most often creole.²³ Whites relied on them to ensure the workforce produced; and in return, drivers received certain privileges—better accommodations and more trust.²⁴ These slaves' social position was equally important to subordinate slaves who looked to them as “community leaders”—though the hierarchy of slaves to serve the demands of production, slaves also possessed communal ties where they made their lives.²⁵

Drivers like Sopó had to balance loyalty to whites while commanding respect amongst the

slaves. As intermediary between master and slave, Sopó's status was derived from the role he maintained in the social arrangement on the plantation. Maintaining the dichotomy proved increasingly difficult when the interests of the two sides could not be reconciled. The tension between his obligation to the master, on the one hand, and slaves on the other, took on grave proportions when two slaves under his tutelage died in suspicious circumstances.

The conflict at Boca Nigua originated with the whipping of a young slave, Benito, at the hands of white distiller Pedro Abadia for allegedly stealing a gourd of liquor and imbibing rather than completing his work duties.²⁶ The beating significantly affected Benito's mental state; he was so distraught over the punishment he took his own life.²⁷ Sopó had a close relationship with the deceased slave, and referred to him as his "godson."²⁸ Archbishop Torres intimates the two were involved in a homosexual love affair, and that the driver was passionately infatuated with his subordinate.²⁹ The claim is questionable but ultimately impossible to verify. It is more likely the Archbishop misunderstood the closeness of the relationships between the creolizing slaves, and heaped scorn on them by painting their sinful affair as the root of the rebellion at Boca Nigua.

Not long after Benito commit suicide, another of Sopó's godsons was placed in the infirmary after falling ill and where he later died.³⁰ The sadness the young slaves felt before their deaths was reportedly expressed in their longing to return to their "native soil."³¹ The lamentations of the slaves illuminate the stressors and existential anguish experienced by slaves integrating into plantation life. The closeness Sopó shared with the slaves would have exposed him to their sorrow and its affect on the community. His avuncular relationship with the slaves was made possible by a social arrangement in which he held a position of authority over them but was also responsible for them.

Sopó was put in a difficult position when those he sought to garner respect from died amidst allegations of physical abuse. His anger supposedly consumed him, but what made this rage more dangerous was his "ascendancy over other Blacks" for the purposes of enlisting them in revenge.³² Governor García y Moreno opined Sopó's influence over his fellow slaves was forceful: the slaves of Boca Nigua were the beneficiaries of good governance and education until Sopó led them astray.³³ What gave him this power? The slaves of Boca Nigua were galvanized by his leadership, but they were also enticed by his willingness to address their lack of remuneration for work.³⁴ Sopó was a figure they could (and did) bring their concerns to about their basic needs. For the Archbishop, this solidified the others slaves interest in the plot, which the governor and judges believed consisted of killing the whites, stealing their belongings, and establishing a revolutionary government in the capital "such as the one in Guaríco [Le Cap], and other French parts."³⁵ Sopó's social position not only spurred his desire to exact revenge on the whites but aided its possibility. He utilized his status within the plantation culture to involve other creole slaves and black auxiliaries to ensure the plot's success.

Francisco Sopó's shared separate living arrangements with Antonio Carretero made it easy for the two to discuss the former's intention to murder the whites.³⁶ To prepare for the uprising, Francisco and Antonio travelled to San Juan to persuade black auxiliary soldiers who served under Jean Francois in the early years of the Haitian Revolution to instruct the slaves from Boca Nigua how to successfully carry out an armed uprising. The soldiers were relatives (parientes) of the driver, another factor indicating Sopó's creole status.³⁷ To gain the auxiliaries trust, the slaves from Boca Nigua supplied them with gifts such as liquor, brought under the auspices of work duties.³⁸ The auxiliaries rejected their petition for assistance; Antonio and Francisco's efforts were in vein.³⁹

However, their actions underscore how the planning of the revolt came to fruition. The slave conspirators premeditated choices were made in response to their relationships within the plantation social arrangement, and their status in this context enabled them to seek out resources. Furthermore, historic changes that brought about the creation of auxiliary fighters—the Haitian Revolution and war with France—presented opportunities for Francisco and Antonio to seek out assistance from experienced fighters. The range of choices changed in conjunction with external events. When observed through the micro lens these linkages become more apparent: macro events and social structures framed possibilities for slaves on a deeply personal level.

Slave Leadership and Co-Conspirators

The ambitious nature of the plot required the enlistment of co-conspirators. Weeks leading up to the revolt Francisco Sopó and Antonio Carretero involved other black slaves: Pedro Viejo (nicknamed Papa Pier), Piti Juan, Tomás Aguirre (known as Tomás Congo), and Cristóbal Cesar.⁴⁰ Sopó used his leadership position to recruit slaves on the plantation to carry out specific roles when the time came for action. He made foremen Piti Juan “commander of the Artillery” because of his experience as an infantryman.⁴¹ Among the ringleaders that formed in the fall of 1796, Antonio Carretero’s wife Ana María rose to leadership and played a prominent role in the execution of the revolt. A domestic slave assigned tasks in the hacienda, Ana María worked closely under manager Oyarsabal.⁴² The knowledge and experience she accrued managing the household provided access to the buildings, including the rooms storing supplies, valuables, and the plantation’s arsenal.⁴³

The primary sources are at odds with each other over her commitment to the conflict. The controversy surrounds tensions that surfaced in the slave leadership a week before the attack. With the date for revolt fast approaching, either Ana María or Francisco Sopó got cold feet and

sought to alert the white managers. Judge Manual Bravo believed María approached Sopó urging him they should warn their master, but the slave leader said he would do it himself.⁴⁴ This narrative contradicts the governor's impression. Ana Maria questioned Sopó's "fortitude" in carrying out the plot, which is different than her commitment to the emancipatory aims of the revolt.⁴⁵ She was not alone; the leadership questioned Sopó's trustworthiness due to his closeness to Oyarsabal.⁴⁶ Moreover, the governor wrote Ana Maria did not seem perturbed at the prospect of death or danger, nor was she pressured out of fear for the other slaves.⁴⁷ In fact, during the revolt, when the whites were chased into the forests and the main hacienda was secured by the slaves, Ana María was coronated queen by the rebels; the slaves bestowed gifts upon her as she presided over a ceremonial feast.⁴⁸ Her experience working in the hacienda translated into knowledge about where to find keys for the plantation's buildings, and while inside, she distributed the master's provisions (clothes, butter, wine, and gunpowder).⁴⁹ If she did have doubts about the plot itself, she certainly did not show any residual signs of uncertainty.

Creolization and the Fragmentation of the Slave Leadership

The day prior to the revolt, Sopó confessed the plot to and Oyarsabal and Pedro Abadia, the white distiller who whipped Benito.⁵⁰ The governor expressed sympathy for the manager regarding when he learned of the conspiracy. Oyarsabal supposedly discovered the dangers but waited, "hoping for a moment to undo the plot."⁵¹ The Archbishop was not as diplomatic. Torres claims Oyarsabal obtained word from his "Subordinates Masters" (Sopó) and failed to notify authorities for two days.⁵² Had the plantation manager acted earlier, Torres opined, the entire revolt at Boca Nigua would not have occurred. The Archbishop was under the impression Oyarsabal's interests—being a "good merchant"—came before his commitment to justice.⁵³

Oyarsabal may have attempted to prolong the situation, addressing the slaves' concerns about their abuse and living conditions, because it would have been preferable to armed revolt.

Violence would disrupt production indefinitely, and likely cost a fortune to repair at time when the Spanish colonials were evacuating. The manager must have believed there was a chance he could pre-emptively intervene.

Oyarsabal's discussions with Sopó coincided with the other members of the slave leadership's growing distrust of the driver's loyalty to the manager. It is uncertain how the other slaves found out, but it likely would not have taken long for word to have spread. His most vociferous opponent was Tomás Congo, who joined the ringleaders despite being from the Bueña Vista plantation. When Manuel Bravo's expedition headed for Boca Nigua they encountered a black man who, though described as "ill" and a "fool," told them: among the residents at Boca Nigua there was one "suspected spy" named Tomás Congo known for his "terrible customs."⁵⁴ Congo represents a radical element of the slave leadership, an outlier that did not have the familiarity with Oyarsabal that Ana María or Francisco (and others in the leadership group) did. Congo's addition to the creolizing space was that of an outsider connected to the revolutionary fervor gripping the island.⁵⁵ Contemporaries made judgments about his African qualities, as his name suggest, and they also depicted him as uncompromisingly lawless. Congo sought to replace Sopó as leader because of the driver's closeness to the whites.⁵⁶ Congo represents another dimension of the slaves' creolization. His unattached status meant he was not hampered by loyalty or relationship with the master. It represents another layer of creolization in Santo Domingo unearthed through a micro focus.

Francisco Sopó's Betrayal?

When the revolt at Boca Nigua finally broke out the tensions within the slave leadership

between Sopó and the others were exacerbated. On Sunday, the slaves gathered for their ration of plantains as they usually did. This time, however, they arrived with “pistols, sabers, machetes...spears, sickles, nails, and knives,” threatening the lives of white plantation overseers.⁵⁷ The slaves of Boca Nigua surrounded the central hacienda where the whites, including Oyarsabal, sought refuge in the thick of smoke and confusion.⁵⁸ Sources show that by this time Francisco Sopó switched sides. He barricaded himself inside the building with Oyarsabal as the slaves commenced their attack.⁵⁹ Their first assault did not penetrate through the main building, yet the slaves reportedly gathered more courage with each rush at the house, while the whites inside armed themselves and tended to the wounded.⁶⁰

The Archbishop marked this point as the final reign of the driver.⁶¹ Sopó endeavoured to negotiate with the slaves, but he had lost his sway due to his perceived betrayal.⁶² The rejection of pleas to end the violence, however, caused enough of a distraction for Oyarsabal to escape and head for the capital. The move, acknowledged the governor, saved the master’s life.⁶³ It also consolidated the slaves’ view that Sopó’s loyalty was reserved for the whites. Under the cover of darkness Oyarsabal fled, leaving behind some of his party.⁶⁴ The distiller Pedro Abadía was killed, found drowned in a cask of liquor, and another white was determined to have died from the “rigor of the whip.”⁶⁵ With the master’s departure, the slaves occupied Boca Nigua’s buildings where they looted and destroyed what they found inside.⁶⁶

Sopó’s ambiguous commitment to the revolt was not only confounding for slaves. Authors of the reports on the Boca Nigua revolt wrestled with the contradictory nature of his behaviour, even mocking it as an idiosyncrasy inherent to blacks.⁶⁷ Did Sopó betray the revolt he started? His reversal is strange considering the risks he took and the sacrifices he made to see it succeed. If governor García’s earlier decree making communication with French forces punishable by

death offered any inkling, penalties for soliciting slaves to overthrow their masters were severe. As a slave driver, a disciplinarian close to the master, he would have known the consequences if the revolt failed. He consciously created a cover story for travelling to San Juan to liaise with Jean Francois soldiers under the cover of night.⁶⁸ The lengths he was willing to go to obtain reparation for his ‘godsons’ deaths indicate his intentions were genuine. At the very least it showed he was willing to fight on the slaves’ behalf. Surely his early devotion does not negate his apprehensions later. What can we make of his about-face?

The tension in Sopó’s actions is a marked feature of the duality inherent to his position within the plantation structure. His closeness to the whites enabled him to subsist in a higher social position, with material benefits, status, and a closer rapport with the master. He was less dispensable than unskilled bozal slaves, and therefore had more security. The stakes were high for other slaves, but Sopó’s position as driver meant he had different factors to consider than say Tomás Congo. It makes sense that Sopó attempted to secure assistance from those he knew with proven experience in engaging in armed conflict (i.e. the soldiers from San Juan). Francisco Sopó appears a calculated man who showed every hint of leading a revolt in the same way. Colonial officials described him as a military commander— “el Capitan” or “el negro Capitan”— a descriptor indicating military prestige that no other slave was given.⁶⁹ He was adept at placing slaves in military roles because they had experience serving in infantry regiments—a move that would increase the chances of victory. With the refusal of assistance from San Juan auxiliaries, the outlook for the revolt’s success looked grim, and likely prompted Sopó’s doubts.⁷⁰ His warning to Oyarsabal may have been an attempt to mitigate the damage, and it might also explain why the master did not act immediately by requesting assistance. As noted, the stakes were high for Oyarsabal too, and his attempts to unravel the conspiracy may

have included overtures to Sopó for help.

Agency of the Slave Leaders

Upon close examination, Sopó's behaviour demonstrates the pressures inherent to slave creolization. His choices were framed within a plantation environment whereby he calculated the stakes and responded to the options available. The decision-making was entirely his own. Creole status was not an automatic precursor for siding with the master. In Sopó's case, the opportunity presented itself because of his role and various exogenous developments on the island (i.e. the black auxiliaries armed by Santo Domingo's government and the Haitian Revolution). How did the other slaves and their rebel leadership conceptualize their future? If Sopó imagined the slaves' interests were better off negotiating with Oyarsabal, the other slaves of Boca Nigua saw a different fate. Judge Bravo states when colonial troops laid siege to Boca Nigua, they received word from Sopó that black rebels were dispersing into the mountains but he could bring them together to resolve the situation.⁷¹ No peace came to pass. Instead, an eruption of flames hastened colonial troops "use of force."⁷² The slaves responded by lighting the estate's sugarcane fields and adjoining woodlands on fire.⁷³ This was a common tactic used by revolutionaries in St. Domingue where destruction of the material mechanisms of oppression eliminated their future usage. Though it may have been a diversion to aide their escape, the rebels of Boca Nigua laid waste to the means sustaining their enslavement, obstructing its continuation. The slaves who took Boca Nigua could not tell what the future held but they made certain live or die, succeed or fail, their work spaces were unusable.

With the plantation in the hands of the slaves, how would they proceed? The slaves removed the plantation's power structure, who or what would replace it? After the scuffle, with the white plantation staff, the slaves would have realized Oyarsabal had fled, and they were fugitives.

Comprised of creole and bozal slaves, different backgrounds and positions on the plantation, the victorious slaves declared Antonio Carretero king and Ana María queen.⁷⁴ The occasion was marked by a celebratory feast in their honour with drumming and chanting. The sound startled Bravo and the troops en route to confront the rebels: “[the slaves’] pride and shamelessness arrived to our ears in celebration, bustle, and uproar with the sound of kettledrums amusing themselves.”⁷⁵ The Archbishop depicted the scene as carnivalesque. The king and queen “toasted the murders they ... committed” with stolen liquor, a symbol of the refinery’s wealth, before turning their affections to their new queen.⁷⁶

Colonial elites encountered slaves engaging in cultural practices deemed anathema to Eurocentric cultural conventions, namely, some incarnation of African song, dance and formal meal. In the absence of supervision and enforcement, the slaves were creating their own rites by introducing fragments of their past into the New World setting in their present. Rebel slaves in St. Domingue’s northern plain engaged in similar ceremonies, most notably at the beginning of the Haitian Revolution when slaves gathered at Bois Caïman. Geggus notes this meeting had a historical function by “sacraliz[ing] [the slaves’] political movement.”⁷⁷ Elements of African cultural heritage, particularly religious rites, were used to communicate solidarity among a heterogeneous group of slaves, most of which were born abroad.⁷⁸ The traditions had to be “transposed” in the New World setting but familiar enough to the ceremony’s participants to have meaning, an especially difficult task because African-born slaves came from a variety of cultural origins. The sounds overheard by Bravo and the Spanish troops—celebration and music—were cultural expressions of slaves coming together and recreating life amid vast social change.

Crowning leaders Antonio and his wife Ana María royalty is consistent with the experience

of other slave rebels on the island. The titles were understandable for bozals and creoles alike because royalty was a form of political rule familiar to both.⁷⁹ Although practiced qualitatively different in Europe, monarchy existed in Africa. Creoles may have had exposure to both through cultural memory of their homeland and knowledge of European rulers through their colonial upbringing. This explains why slave leaders in St. Domingue, such as Jean Francois, Georges Biassou, and Toussaint Louverture, saw no contradiction in pledging allegiance to the Spanish Crown during their alliance.⁸⁰ Coronating the husband and wife at Boca Nigua, slaves made this form of political authority their own. Their bonds to monarchs had been severed when they were removed from Africa, or through political turmoil on the island. The slaves of Boca Nigua responded by creating new political authorities.

Creolization and the Elite Response

As I discussed in Chapter 2, creolization for elites in the Caribbean had markedly different consequences than slaves despite sharing certain features. The project imagined by local powerbrokers in Santo Domingo during the late eighteenth century was critical of Spain's centuries-long neglect, but it desired backing from the metropole to secure its future prosperity. The Haitian Revolution and the end of Spanish rule on the island in the 1790s provoked a crisis among creole elites who faced the difficult choice of emigrating without their slave property or staying in a colony nominally abolitionist. During this period public confidence in colonial governance was low and officials were blamed for the king's abandonment. Whereas the previous portion of the chapter focused on the dynamics of creolization's influence on the cause of the revolt and its slave instigators, I now show how the process shaped the elite response.

Governor García explained in his letter to Manuel de Godoy, the response to the revolt at the Hacienda de Boca Nigua consisted of three phases: evicting the black slaves who seized control

of the mill; safeguarding the property, particularly the buildings; and apprehending the offending slaves.⁸¹ García claims the procedures undertaken to subdue the revolt were carried out in an expeditious manner due to the gravity of the affair.⁸² This point is repeatedly raised by colonial elites in the primary documents. The significance of Boca Nigua as the most prominent plantation, the nature of the revolt involving radicalized slaves, and the contentious political climate aggravated colonial officials' perception of the threat. The measures they adopted in their swift response reflected how consequential they regarded the event.

The morning after the revolt at eight-thirty, Lord Regent of the Audiencia José Antonio de Vrizar sent judge Manuel Bravo an official request to join dispatched troops on the move to Boca Nigua. Bravo offered his services and brought along his son Bernando, a young soldier from the Cantabria regiment.⁸³ The importance of quashing the revolt speedily and efficiently was shown in officials' willingness to immediately outfit Bravo with a host of resources. He acknowledged their "abundant providence" in supplying all of what he requested, ranging from medical doctors (including a surgeon) to secretaries.⁸⁴ He selected a scribe (Jose Maria Rodriguez) and bailiff (Jose Maria Garos) to help thoroughly investigate how the revolt began before departing to confront the rebellious slaves.⁸⁵ In his absence, Bravo ordered them to remain in the capital and take statements from the runaway slaves who alerted officials because he desired a deeper understanding of what happened.⁸⁶ Led by twenty-seven grenadiers, Bravo left to rendezvous with reinforcements. Nevertheless, what the slave witnesses had to say he deemed important enough to procure them a bedroom where they could rest under the care of highborn men Bravo trusted.⁸⁷

Troops were dispatched to Boca Nigua within forty-eight hours, the amount of time Oyarsabal waited before alerting authorities.⁸⁸ "People of the sword and pen gave...orders

without delay,” states the Archbishop.⁸⁹ What hastened their action? Torres believed the impetus behind the official response was fear.⁹⁰ In his view, it stirred colonial elites’ determination to forcefully snuff out the revolt: it was the spur that counteracted Oyarsabal’s inaction.⁹¹ Fear stemmed from colonial officials’ understanding of the slaves’ intentions, the threat level had to be considered to initiate an effective military response. García asserted the rebellious slaves set their sights on the areas surrounding estates, so local slaves could “hear the sound of freedom” (“oir el sonido de la Libertad”) and rally to their cause.⁹² The governor explained to his metropolitan superior the slave plot comprised of murdering the whites, stealing their goods, and establishing a revolutionary government in the capital “such as the one in Guarico [Le Cap], and other French parts.”⁹³ Audiencia judges concurred. They concluded the revolt was a premeditated crime consisting of two stages. First, the slaves intended to eliminate the mill’s manager and white dependants; second, they sought to declare their freedom as a means of attracting slaves in neighbouring estates “to follow their disastrous ideas.”⁹⁴

Fear of the Slaves and the Specter of Revolution

Officials deemed the slave revolt a high risk to the security of the capital city, and with the Haitian Revolution still underway in the west, they did not have to look far for precedents of how quickly slave revolts can spread and gain strength. In the Audiencia’s report, the court’s scribe pronounces that if not for the vigorous suppression of the slaves directed by the colonial government, the “contagion” would grow into a dangerous force.⁹⁵ The objective of colonial government was preventing this from taking place, and they had to move quickly to do so. The smaller numbers of plantations in Santo Domingo compared to the French colony in the west did not allay fears in the capital. In fact, as the Archbishop noted, despite St. Domingue having numerous large plantations where he says there were upwards of 500 or 600 black slaves on

each, even a small rebellion is “contagious,” capable of forming a “rebellious multitude” that could oppress the entire populace.⁹⁶

Manuel Bravo explained his tactics for defeating the rebel slaves were driven by the potential for Boca Nigua’s slaves to gain supporters. When reinforcements arrived, he ordered the regiments to cut off entryways to the San Juan and Azua plantations, where Bravo feared rebel slaves would arm slaves in the area.⁹⁷ His military forces, Bravo observed, were invigorated by their determination to “beat [the] venomous hydra” before it multiplied and overwhelmed the colony.⁹⁸ Spanish troops were reportedly convinced of the importance of their mission when they witnessed the slaves’ ceremony at Boca Nigua, that is, before it was interrupted by arson and cannon fire.

Assuring the Public Order will be Maintained

A micro perspective reveals this concern was multidimensional. The officials all testified to the danger of Boca Nigua’s rebels transforming into a political movement similar to the slaves in St. Domingue. But also at stake was the further deterioration of the relationship between the local Hispanic population and colonial officials in the process of evacuating the island.

Audiencia judges identified an additional fear stirred by the Boca Nigua revolt: it threatened the confidence of the local population. The broad-based effort to confront the wayward slaves, in their minds, was successful because it avoided “public damage.”⁹⁹ The underlying fear motivating colonial elites’ response to the revolt was concern for the population’s dissatisfaction. As part of the coordinated attempt to subdue the violence at Boca Nigua and apprehend those responsible, military commanders were directed to seek out “loyalists” and “good neighbours” from the valley to aide the Crown.¹⁰⁰ But Bravo made sure not to alarm certain landowners in the process of seeking out those loyal to the Crown.¹⁰¹ He sought to contain news of the revolt to

avoid raising alarm in a setting where locals were already concerned about the lack of security following the Treaty of Basel. On the other hand, information favourable to the colonial officials was released and made priority.¹⁰²

Colonial officials were perturbed by the potential fallout from the Boca Nigua revolt; the joint fear of anarchy and public outrage shaped the urgency of their response. But their reaction also had to convey a message assuring the local elites their security worries would be addressed. The colonial government wanted to show it was still in control and working to restore trust. Officials seized the opportunity to make an example out of those who threatened the stability of traditional order through the public display of their apprehension and trial. This course of action would supply the slave offenders with a lesson about the consequences of emulating the revolution in St. Domingue. But it also provided local creole elites with a demonstration to reassure them of the colonial government's presence as a relevant political authority.

The Archbishop begins his account of the revolt by sharply criticizing Manuel Bravo for essentially playing-up the affair. The French Commissioner praised Bravo, his son and the Cantabria regiment in a circulated decree. But this was more about optics than truth, explains Torres, who described it as a work of comedy.¹⁰³ He continues his critique of Bravo by commenting that if one were to judge from the pronouncement alone, Bravo engaged in a storied battle exhibiting praiseworthy bravery. As the Archbishop noted, all the fuss about what was accomplished and the commendations obscured the "true cause, progress, [and] end" of the uprising.¹⁰⁴ Acknowledging he had nothing but the best of wishes for Manuel Bravo, the Archbishop felt the judge deceived the king by perpetuating falsehoods about what really occurred.¹⁰⁵ Bravo reportedly made a grand display of his intervention at Boca Nigua. For example, it is said he feigned injuries, portraying them as resulting from battle, but they

were self-inflicted, caused by his own pretensions. He wrapped the small scratch above his eye with a red handkerchief when he returned to the city portraying a battle-hardened soldier, when he was later seen laughing and enjoying the company of friends.¹⁰⁶ The Archbishop referred to his actions as the “pomp of war,” an ostentatious act that may project an image to onlookers, but behind the scenes Bravo was said to have been mocked by the soldiers for his embellishments.¹⁰⁷

The Battle for Boca Nigua and the Apprehension of the Rebel Slaves

The first skirmish between Spanish troops and the slaves at Boca Nigua occurred in the early morning hours, December 1. Bravo and his men encamped around the estate the previous night, using the time to prepare. It is at this time they overheard the sounds of the slaves celebrating. The troops were surprised by cannon fire at nine o'clock at night when a single shot volleyed into the cane fields setting them ablaze. As the flames engulfed Boca Nigua's fields, a military contingent composed of two officials and 51 grenadiers from the Cantabria regiment in Santo Domingo arrived to reinforce Bravo.¹⁰⁸ Reluctant to do battle in the dark, the commanders decided to commit to a surprise attack from four different directions in the morning.¹⁰⁹ The troops pushed across the River Nigua (now River Yubaza), exchanging gunfire with the slaves, and despite setbacks caused by smoke, by daybreak the slave rebels were forced to flee their positions (along with the canons).¹¹⁰ When Bravo entered Boca Nigua he found it largely abandoned since many of the slaves scattered into the nearby forest, only some stayed behind to surrender.¹¹¹ Troops discovered the corpses of six slaves during their inspection of the plantation.¹¹² In total seven black slaves died in the conflict, one of the ten wounded died in hospital.¹¹³ On the other side, Bravo lost one soldier in the firefight, and he requested medical help for six others who were injured.¹¹⁴ The fight for the plantation was over, and now the situation represented a hunt for the fugitive slaves seeking shelter in the thick of the forest.

Assistance from the Monteros

One of the challenges Bravo identified in this campaign was the officers' need to overcome “the lack of local knowledge.”¹¹⁵ He was referring to their difficulty navigating the topography of the environs, which had proved a hindrance in defeating the slaves sooner. With the escaped rebels now hiding in the woods, the problem re-emerged, yet this time it was substantially greater. To the advantage of Spanish forces, the montero population living in the area came to aide them in the pursuit. “The mountain people from the country with spears, and machetes, and some with rifles have been most useful in the prosecution,” wrote governor García.¹¹⁶ Monteros facilitated the apprehension of the escaped slaves because they could draw on their knowledge of the landscape (geographic familiarity) to pursue the fugitives into the forest.

The monteros led Spanish troops through the wooded terrain. Unlike the relationship of fear or loyalty, the montero allies persuaded to perform the task for a price. Oyarsabal offered payment for their “gratification.”¹¹⁷ The strategy was rewarding; monteros were adept at locating all the slaves in few days. Tomás Congo evaded capture for three weeks.¹¹⁸ He was the last of the Boca Nigua rebels to be apprehended by authorities and their montero allies. The countryside rallied to Oyarsabal, the governor claimed, and he portrayed the relationship between the monteros and Spanish troops as a union between city and country—two guard posts keepings keeping watch over the colony.¹¹⁹

Castigation of Offenders: Sentencing & Execution

People in the city of Santo Domingo were reportedly aghast at the “savage scandals” and “detestable crimes” committed by the slaves at Boca Nigua.¹²⁰ So deeply offended, locals pleaded for colonial government to deliver punishments that would set a precedent—an example for public reassurance and one that slaves in the colony would fear.¹²¹ Nearly a month

passed since the violence at Boca Nigua when the presiding lords and judges of the Real Audiencia met to weigh evidence and exchange information about what transpired. The aim of their deliberations was to determine the sentencing of the slave offenders and prepare for their castigation. Such an important matter, they agreed, required thorough investigation into the series of events that transpired and the actors involved.¹²² After reviewing the evidence submitted by colonial officials, which likely included the depositions Bravo and his cohorts obtained from the slaves, the Audiencia's legal authorities passed judgement on slave leaders and participants.

The most severe punishments were passed down to seven ringleaders believed to be integral to planning and carrying out the revolt. They included: Antonio Carretero and Ana María, whom the judges titled king and queen of the revolt; Pedro Viejo (Papa Pier); Thomas Aguirre (Tomás Congo), described as an "ingrate" from Bueña Vista; Piti Juan, a military leader who conspired from the beginning; Cristóbal Cesar, the slave reportedly responsible for lighting the sugarcane fields on fire; and Francisco Sopó.¹²³ For their "abominable crimes, unworthy of human society," the seven were to be put to death by hanging; they were decapitated, and quartered; later their corpses were ordered to be placed in venues around the capital city.¹²⁴ The Audiencia stressed the erection of the mutilated cadavers would instill terror, giving the local population a valuable lesson about the consequences of slave resistance.¹²⁵ Colonial elites took this step further with the slaves of Boca Nigua. Upon executing the seven ring leaders, the hangman left their corpses suspended from the gallows so the ingenio's residents could be made to walk underneath the bodies.¹²⁶ The dead rebel leaders were not cut down until the following morning when their limbs were removed for public display.¹²⁷ The heads were saved—delivered to Oyarsabal reportedly for verification purposes.¹²⁸

The Audiencia judges believed the punishment of the leaders was in line with the grievous danger they posed to the wider population: their penalties were intended to reflect the threat they posed to the community. Determining the leaders of the revolt's punishments were filled with an sufficient dose of terror, the court produced less severe consequences for the accomplices.¹²⁹ The bulk of them were given 100 lashes in the pillory.¹³⁰ A small group of slave women (Feliciana, Francisca Ana Marcela, Maria Mora, Antonia) and four males were subjected to 50 lashes, branded, and placed in shackles for ten years.¹³¹ Their crime: fortifying the Boca Nigua hacienda, for it is said they nearly escaped the gallows.¹³² Slaves charged with lesser offences were deported to Havana and Panama for incarceration.¹³³ As for the three auxiliary soldiers who once fought under slave general Jean Francois, all were implicated and condemned to hard labour abroad, despite the Archbishop claiming their innocence.¹³⁴ And for the rest of the slaves, the court reminded them they were still property and would submit to the wishes of Oyarsabal.¹³⁵

The execution took place in early December. García explained the day was a difficult one, and he feared the growing spectator interest.¹³⁶ He took additional security measures to contain free and enslaved blacks in the crowd who he was convinced were “foreigners” fixated on ideas about liberty and equality (i.e. likely from St. Domingue).¹³⁷ García set up patrols, armed more of his guards, and stationed one hundred grenadiers at the execution site.¹³⁸ He also notified all nearby garrisons of the increased threat level. No doubt there was much at stake in the execution: Who would possess the ability to perpetrate violence legitimately? If, as García feared, the execution was disrupted by blacks influenced by abolitionist or republican thought, the colonial government would no longer be able to perform its most basic duty. Conversely, if colonial officials bolstered security and the punishments were executed as intended, political authorities could demonstrate their political pre-eminence. The strong, quick response to the revolt, the

forceful apprehension of the rebels, and large military presence at the execution signalled colonial officials were assuring the population they were maintaining order.

In the aftermath, García commended Oyarsabal, he thought the locals owed gratitude for the bravery he showed.¹³⁹ The manager told the governor the revolt changed his “character and spirit,” and certainly took its toll on his expenses.¹⁴⁰ Given the gravity of the threat Garcia expressed satisfaction with the results. He was under the impression a revolt of this proportion was unthinkable “in a country like this one,” but when it took the local community by surprise, he committed his efforts to ensuring it served as “a lesson of the most exemplary point.”¹⁴¹ García also highlighted the heightened anxiety pervasive in the colony since the Treaty of Basel; he pointed out the Santo Domingo had already experienced shock when the Spanish colony was ceded to France, especially with the departure date steadily approaching.¹⁴² Nevertheless, the most important outcome for the governor was achieving calm, and he was delighted to report to the prime minister the city and its surrounding countryside showed no further sign of disorder.¹⁴³

What is more, he stressed the population was content with the level of justice meted out by the colonial government on the slaves’ “scandalous excesses.”¹⁴⁴ In the summer of 1797, Regent of the Audiencia José Antonio de Vrizar, followed up with the metropole concerning the Boca Nigua revolt and its repercussions.¹⁴⁵ He confirmed the slave rebels from Boca Nigua admired the French and acknowledged some slight fears still exists.¹⁴⁶ The judge assured the Crown, however, that since he received Royal Orders in February there had been no further outbreaks of violence because officials “kept the decency and respect for authority” much to the approval of the Hispanic inhabitants.¹⁴⁷

Narrowly focusing on the violence that erupted in 1796 on the Boca Nigua plantation affords

a window into the intricacies of creolization in Santo Domingo during the 'unfortunate era.' The spark that set the revolt in motion stemmed from the roles and relationships integral to the operation of the plantation. Francisco Sopó's position as driver in this hierarchical social world and its associated meaning motivated his call to arms. His status enabled him to take measures that would increase the likelihood of a victorious outcome, most notably connecting with kin at the nearby San Juan plantation for assistance. Sopó's subsequent decision to protect his master and abandon the violence exhibits the tension inherent to slave creolization. His closeness to Oyarsabal in the slave hierarchy presented him with a range of options unavailable to other slaves (i.e. Tomás Congo). It did not determine the pre-eminence of his loyalty to his master—other creole slaves did not follow his lead—but is reflective of his agency within the structural possibilities that presented themselves.

Colonial elites answered the violence by acting urgently, motivated by the danger the rebel slaves posed to the capital. Underneath the surface, micro-level analysis shows their fear was rooted in the prospect of a further deterioration of public confidence in government's ability to maintain order. Through the apprehension and trial of the slave rebels, the colonial government aimed to send a message to the slaves about the consequences of pursuing freedom. But the lesson was not solely reserved for the enslaved; it also sought to reassure the creole public. Assisted by the creole knowledge of the *monteros* in apprehending the offenders, colonial elites used the sentencing and execution of rebels as lesson for unruly slaves in deterrence, and for the creole population, one of reassurance. The slave and elite experiences with creolization, when taken together, are brought to life through microhistorical analysis.

Notes

¹ Franco, 60-61.

² Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s," 140-141.

³ Pinto, "Santo Domingo's Slaves in the Context of the Peace of Basel: Boca Nigua's Black Insurrection, 1796," *Journal of Early American History* 3 (2013): 137, doi.10.1163/18770703-00301001; *Sublevación de negros en Samana*, May 7, 1795, letter, MECD, PARES, Archivo General de Simancas, Leg. 7160,18, digital image 5, <http://pares.mcu.es> (accessed February 27, 2017).

⁴ Aldermen of Santo Domingo cited in Pinto, 134.

⁵ Ibid., 135-136.

⁶ Technically, there are five sources if Jose Francisco Hidalgo is counted; however, he was relaying the official stance of the court, so his perspective is more of a reflection of the Audiencia judges.

⁷ See chapter three for this distinction.

⁸ The primary source documents on the Boca Nigua revolt are letters, though they read like reports, summarizing large sums of knowledge about developments in the colonies. Thus the authors likely did not feel the need to include the individual testimonies.

⁹ As we shall see in at the end of this chapter, when discussing the administration of penalties for the rebel slaves, providing testimony did not spare one from receiving punishment. Even those who assisted the master, such as Sopó, would not be spared the same traumatic death as his co-conspirators. While slaves had their own motives for sharing information with officials, ultimately it gained them no mercy.

¹⁰ Bravo, digital image 18. The origins of the languages are not mentioned.

¹¹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, image 22.

¹² García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 5.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s," 141.

¹⁵ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 5.

¹⁶ Juan José Andreu Ocariz, "La rebelion de los esclavos de Boca Nigua," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos Sevilla* 27 (1970): 557.

¹⁷ Jones, 113.

¹⁸ Carretero translates cartwright; Hidalgo, digital image 14.

¹⁹ See chapter 2 for comparative analysis of the prominence of the plantation in Hispanic versus non-Hispanic colonies.

²⁰ See chapter 2 for overview of Mintz's notion of the plantation as the key impetus behind creolization in the Caribbean.

²¹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 19.

²² Geggus, “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s,” 142.

²³ Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 37.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Bravo, digital image 18.

²⁷ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 19.

²⁸ This is Geggus’ translation. See “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s,” 142.

²⁹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 19.

³⁰ Bravo, digital image 20.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² García y Moreno, *Suilevación de negros de la Hacienda Boca-Nigua*, digital image 6.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ The archbishop does not specify the slaves outstanding greivances outside their lack of pay. Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 19.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Bravo, digital image 22.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, digital image 20.

³⁸ Likely from Boca Nigua’s distillery. *Ibid.*

³⁹ Geggus, “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s,” 142.

⁴⁰ Ocariz, 559.

⁴¹ Bravo, digital image 24.

⁴² Ocariz, 564; Bravo, digital image 23.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Geggus, “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s,” 143; Bravo, digital image 21.

⁴⁵ García y Moreno, *Suilevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital images 6-7,

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, image 6.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, image 7.

⁴⁹ Bravo, digital image 25.

⁵⁰ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 20; Ocariz, 561.

⁵¹ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 7.

⁵² digital image 20.

⁵³ Ibid, image 22.

⁵⁴ Bravo, digital image 9.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 7.

⁵⁷ Bravo, digital image 22.

⁵⁸ Hidalgo, image 5.

⁵⁹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 20.

⁶⁰ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 7.

⁶¹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 21.

⁶² García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, image 7.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., image 8.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Hidalgo, digital image 6.

⁶⁷ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, image 20.

⁶⁸ Bravo, digital image 20-21.

⁶⁹ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 6.

⁷⁰ Geggus points out this possibility. See “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean,” 143.

⁷¹ Bravo, digital image 11.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., digital image 10.

⁷⁴ Hidalgo, digital image 8.

⁷⁵ Bravo, digital image 10.

⁷⁶ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 21.

⁷⁷ David Patrick Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 91.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Popkin, 142.

⁸⁰ James, 94.

⁸¹ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 4.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Bravo, digital image 5-6.

⁸⁴ Ibid., image 7.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., image 7-8.

⁸⁷ Ibid., image 8.

⁸⁸ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 4.

⁸⁹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, image 21.

⁹⁰ Ibid., digital images 20-21.

⁹¹ Ibid., image 21.

⁹² García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 6.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Hidalgo, digital image 5.

⁹⁵ Ibid., digital image 6.

⁹⁶ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, image 22.

⁹⁷ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 11.

⁹⁸ Bravo, digital image 11.

⁹⁹ Hidalgo, digital image 7.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Bravo, digital image 8.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 16.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., digital 19.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. digital image 17.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., digital image 18.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 11.

¹⁰⁹ Bravo, digital image 12.

¹¹⁰ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 11.

¹¹¹ Bravo, digital image 17.

¹¹² Ibid., digital image 16.

¹¹³ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 6.

¹¹⁴ Bravo, digital image 15.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital images 9-10. "La Gente montera del País con Lanza, y machete, y algunos con fusil o carabina ha sido la mas util para la persecucion en el bosque mucho mas con el aliciente de gratificacion en dinero que ofrecio y pago Oyarzabal."

¹¹⁷ Ibid., digital image 10. García y Moreno does not specify what was paid or how much, only that the currency came from the plantation manager.

¹¹⁸ Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean," 145-146.

¹¹⁹ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, digital image 10.

¹²⁰ Hidalgo, digital image 7.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid., digital image 5.

¹²³ Ibid., digital image 8.

¹²⁴ Ibid., digital image 9.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., digital images 12-13.

¹²⁷ Ibid., digital image 13.

¹²⁸ Ibid., digital image 14.

¹²⁹ Ibid., digital image 10.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, image 22.

¹³⁵ Hidalgo, digital image 11.

¹³⁶ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda de Boca-Nigua*, image 11.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. digital image 12.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., digital image 4.

¹⁴² Ibid., digital image 11.

¹⁴³ Ibid., digital image 4.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Vrizar, *Regente Audiencia Santo Domingo acusa recibo R.O.*

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., digital image 1.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Chapter 5: Conclusions: The Boca Nigua Affair: Retrospective and Prospective

“Tragedy and Glory” and in the “Unfortunate Era” explored the creolization of Santo Domingo’s population at the end of the eighteenth century. Adopting a micro-level analysis, I focused on a little-known slave revolt at the Boca Nigua sugar refinery in 1796 to assess creolization’s impact on social life in Santo Domingo. What can intensive study of a comparatively small-scale revolt reveal about how creolization affected the lives of people during a period of significant social, cultural and political change? Providing a comprehensive answer to this question has been the aim of this research project.

This final chapter is a reflection on the material discussed thus far—a summation of the main argument, themes, and issues that have emerged. I re-examine the conceptual implications of creolization; microhistory as the historiographic approach best suited to appreciate the socio-historical process; and the tumultuous historical period in which the Boca Nigua revolt occurred (i.e. the ‘unfortunate era’). Creolization, microhistory and the revolutionary 1790s have each accumulated substantial bodies of scholarship; when aligned together, insights and questions come to the fore that qualify theoretical treatments and enable the generation of new ideas. I return to the preceding chapters with a discussion of how the assertions raised in each help provide a more thorough response to the research question. Finally, I conclude by commenting on how the findings contribute to the emerging literature on Dominican nationalism and national identities, creating avenues for future research.

The historical actors involved in the Boca Nigua revolt—from the slaves who instigated the armed uprising to the judges who condemned them—were influenced by creolization. I set out to ground this claim by exploring the many aspects of the socio-historical process and the historiographic approach congruent with this objective. The early challenge came in reconciling

creolization in the Caribbean involved historical phenomenon shared by colonies throughout the region (e.g. waves of migration of Europeans and Africans, the development of the Atlantic slave trade, and the territorial conquest by competing European powers), but it varied among them. The process was shaped by specific socio-economic factors, power relations, and notions of racial superiority.

The colonization of the region was dominated by Spain until the arrival of English, French and Dutch in the early seventeenth century. Settlements in the region were distinguished by the fact they were designed as extensions of metropolitan power and their economies were organized around agricultural production.¹ The founding of early French Caribbean colonies, what Chaudenson calls “homestead societies,” possessed similar socio-economic features to Spanish colonies: coffee and sugar production on small-scale plantations where slave and master possessed working relations defined by a closer social and spatial proximity.² The commonalities, however, were less obvious in non-Iberian colonies transformed by the sugar revolution (beginning in Barbados and Guadeloupe in the 1640s).³ The shift to largescale sugar production was accompanied by the mass importation of African slaves—significantly altering the demographics of non-Hispanic colonies.⁴ Growing in scale and complexity, plantations populated by African slaves adapting to life in the colonies became the central production model in non-Hispanic colonies.

The first issue that arose when examining creolization in the Caribbean concerns its divergence in non-Hispanic and Hispanic colonies. In the former, the sugar plantation acted as the central site of economic production and social life, whereas sugar production and the presence of the plantation declined toward the end of the sixteenth century in Hispanic colonies such as Santo Domingo.⁵ Spanish conquest of the Caribbean laid the foundation for colonizing

practices in the region—the migration of colonists, importation of African slaves and the indigenization of migrants and their children into colonies. The term creole is Iberian in origin (*criollo* in Spanish) and was used to differentiate the birth status of colonial subjects.⁶ Spanish colonization of the Caribbean affixed an oppositional meaning to the term creole, one invoking the marked contrast between the New World and Europe.⁷ Though creolization is a modern term, the word creole and the process of induction into the colonial world originated in antiquity.⁸ The opening of the region to non-Hispanic powers, however, expanded its original meaning to include the social organization found on plantations.⁹

“Bozal” and “criollo,” for example, were adopted in St. Domingue (Gallicised as *bosal* and *creole*), borrowed from the Spanish to distinguish colonial-born slaves from those born in Africa.¹⁰ Creole referred to a designation held by slaves within the plantation social order.¹¹ The practice of “seasoning” bozal slaves in Jamaica and St. Domingue involved creole slaves initiating new arrivals into with the work environment for a brief period (in French colonies six months) before the bozals commenced their duties.¹² African-born slaves were socialized into plantation life not only to learn the work expectations: they were compelled to learn relevant symbols of authority from creoles.¹³ In St. Domingue, C.L.R. James explains creole slaves’ knowledge of their home environments corresponded with their higher position in the hierarchy of slaves (i.e. creoles obtained better work assignments and accommodations).¹⁴ But creoles formed an ambiguous part of plantation’s power structure. The creole designation introduced a dynamic into plantation life whereby creole slaves were torn between maintaining good relations with the master and the loyalty of slaves.¹⁵ This touches on the study of liminality—how people respond to change and transition—and the in-between stage of social and political processes.¹⁶ The structure presented creole slaves with different “stakes in accommodation and in resistance,”

notes Mintz.¹⁷

Given the early end to the plantation boom in the Spanish Caribbean before the seventeenth century, anthropologist Sidney Mintz questions whether creolization is the appropriate concept to describe the experience in Hispanic colonies.¹⁸ He maintains that due to slave labour becoming economically unsustainable in the Spanish Caribbean, slaves were manumitted in large numbers.¹⁹ This resulted in miscegenation and colonial-born offspring, but these peoples were not genuinely as creolized as those living in plantation societies, argues Mintz; Santo Domingo and other Spanish colonies are exceptional by comparison.²⁰ The social organization and the kinds of relationships engendered on plantations (e.g. the creation of new languages) did not factor as greatly into Santo Domingo's creolization. Mintz supports his case by highlighting the absence of creole languages in Hispanic colonies—a phenomenon he asserts is contingent on plantation work-life as a milieu in which African slaves synthesized languages.²¹ Spanish colonial populations certainly adopted the tongue of the colonizer, but, as Mintz successfully argues elsewhere, language is only one index for gauging creolization.²²

I qualified Mintz's ideas through microhistorical analysis of the late eighteenth century—an era of change in the Spanish colony, when development of its cattle industry hinged on plantation slavery in St. Domingue and the economic boom led to sugar plantations were being reintroduced outside the capital city, Santo Domingo. By emphasizing the plantation system as the impetus behind creolization, Mintz leaves a void on the process in the Hispanic Caribbean: he does not explicate what creolization looked like outside the plantation, where economic symbiosis occurred through transcolonial trade.²³ This is crucial for Santo Domingo: the colony's creolization took shape on an island alongside the region's prototypical plantation society, St. Domingue. The Spanish colony's adoption of sugar plantation production in the

eighteenth century hybridized the practice of slavery: slaves creolized in rural areas on cattle ranches and on the outskirts of the city of Santo Domingo on sugar plantations.

Examination of a plantation setting in Santo Domingo, such as Boca Nigua, demonstrates the line between Hispanic and non-Hispanic creolization is not as rigid as Mintz conceives. The Boca Nigua refinery was large enough for creole to designate a position within the plantation structure (similar the French and British settings), and the key slave leaders who initiated the revolt (Francisco Sopó and Ana María) held positions on the plantation akin to experience in St. Domingue and Jamaica described by Chaudenson, Brathwaite and James (discussed in chapter 2). Sopó was a slaver driver caught between loyalty to his fellow slaves, on the one hand, and his master on the other. He went to great lengths to avenge those who saw him as a godfather figure, and it is evident his position on the plantation put him in a difficult position regarding the stakes of revolution and potential for cooption.

Both meanings of creole were present in Boca Nigua affair: the original criollo—those acclimatizing to colonial life—and the social designation and socio-economic function of slaves on plantations. The young slaves on the plantation who died amid accusations of abuse reportedly vocalized their longing for their homelands, indicating the existential angst associated with indigenization.²⁴ Moreover, the slave driver Sopó and the slaves he recruited as the leaders of the Boca Nigua revolt embodied the structural designation found on plantations. Ana María's work placement in the household was unlike the experience of most women working on the plantations in the Caribbean—suggesting her higher position within the slave hierarchy.²⁵ Both Ana Maria and Francisco Sopó used the privileges and access they possessed due to their status on the plantation. They pursued redress for wrongs committed against the slave community—the social milieu in which slaves were remaking their lives.

Another important consideration raised in chapter two is the power dynamics involved in creolization. Vast social inequality made for varying experiences for segments of Caribbean populations. Local elites (i.e. literate men of importance either via function in the colonial governance or land ownership) did not creolize in the same way peasants and slaves did. The process had different outcomes depending on an individual's placement in the colonial social world. I used Benedict Anderson and Sidney Mintz's ideas theories to delineate creolization's implications from above and below. Anderson's *Imagined Communities* illuminates the shift in elite political consciousness in Latin America beginning in the late eighteenth century. His emphasis on creole elites asserting themselves in opposition to the metropole reveals another crucial dimension of creolization: its role in decolonization and the genesis of national identities. I will return to Anderson's work in the final section on Dominican nationalism and creolization.

Sidney Mintz's conception of creolization involves slaves replacing cultural materials, torn asunder through enslavement in Africa and forced migration to the Caribbean.²⁶ The formation of new social relationships and institutions was vital for subaltern peoples coming to term with their oppressive surroundings.²⁷ His account focuses on the quotidian aspects of Caribbean slavery: how slaves experienced the tragedy of their inhumane conditions in an environment where slavery permeated every aspect of social life.²⁸ Mintz demonstrates how the cruel conditions in which they subsisted did not define slaves, nor did it diminish their capacity for the reinvention of culture through creative synthesis.²⁹ Slaves brought fragments of their cultures to the Caribbean where they were remade through social interaction on plantations.³⁰

While the theory put forward by Mintz does not precisely fit with the history of Santo Domingo because of the long absence of the plantation, creolization from below is evident in the Boca Nigua revolt. Primary accounts of the revolt, for example, note rebel slaves held a

ceremony in which they figuratively crowned Antonio Carretero king and Ana María queen.³¹ Sources suggests the event was primarily cultural: food was shared; drumming was heard by witnesses, along with chanting.³² Without the oversight of whites to impose order, the slaves of Boca Nigua engaged in their own rites by mixing fragments of their traditions into their present circumstances.

We cannot determine which West African customs were present because witnesses likely had no such knowledge.³³ The ceremonial practices were notably unconventional from the regimentation and subordination of black slaves; the actions of the slaves appalled the colonial troops arriving to subdue the revolt.³⁴ The spectre of slaves uniting and appropriating the food and liquor on the plantation greatly offended judge Bravo who led the expedition to bring the offenders to justice.³⁵ Boca Nigua's slaves' decision to engage in a cultural function was not unlike the behaviour of their enslaved neighbours at the Bois Caïman ceremony prior to the onset of the Haitian Revolution. Remnants of African culture (i.e. religious customs and rites) were combined to produce solidarity among slaves with different geographic origins and ethnic backgrounds, most of whom recently arrived to St. Domingue.³⁶

Microhistory: Scale, Agency and the Micro-Macro Link

Unpacking creolization is difficult because the process is multifaceted: dependant on patterns of colonization and economic the subordination of Caribbean colonies; master-slave and colony-metropole relations; and related historical processes (most notably slave emancipation) unfolding amid the revolutionary events of the era. I used microhistory to capture the intricacies of creolization in Santo Domingo during the 1790s. The historiographic approach: (1) fixes attention on a small, circumscribed area in the past (i.e the Boca Nigua slave revolt); (2) recognizes the importance of human agency; and (3) appreciates the role of the micro lens in

explaining wider macro phenomenon.³⁷

In “‘Tragedy and Glory’ in the ‘Unfortunate Era,’” I aimed to gain a closer, more intimate understanding of social relationships in Santo Domingo during the 1790s by “changing the scale.”³⁸ Grasping the value of the small site requires viewing history in a certain way. Microhistorians reject the notion the “highest abstractions” in historiography, Karacauer writes, “define all particulars.”³⁹ Historians adopting narrower parameters in their studies became increasingly conscious of the power relationship between the historian and the subject of their research; macro-level assessments create distance between the observer and the object of study.⁴⁰ For the sake of comprehensibility, a macro perspective hinges on broad generalizations about social phenomenon over long historical periods. However, the more sweeping the assessment of the past is, the greater potential for historian to be removed from the experiences of individuals (i.e. the decision-making power of actors from the past and how they responded to the social contexts in which they lived).⁴¹ Creolization is not a disembodied force affecting nameless souls for centuries; the process affected people on a deeply personal level. Altering the scale grounds overarching narratives in case examples, and it positions the researcher to learn more about the qualitative aspects about how individuals experienced creolization.

I demonstrated the socio-historical process influenced conscious historical actors who expressed a range of personal and political concerns. The tragedy slaves endured and the future glory they attempted to secure through revolt was not solely a product of socio-economic structures but how they shared their lives together.⁴² When adopting the micro scale we can more readily identify the specific dynamics at play.

The Boca Nigua affair—a small-scale revolt that took place over the course of six weeks—served as the focal point of analysis. Intensive exploration of the event aides in clarifying

complex social interactions across a wide range of members in early Dominican society.

Plantation slaves, retired black auxiliary soldiers, colonial officials, local landowners, and free mixed-race peasants can all be seen interacting in conflict and collaboration. Utilizing this small space has proven to be an effective way of tracking how the multifaceted process of creolization can be analyzed and conceptualized more concretely.

Approaching the Boca Nigua revolt with the tenets of microhistory in mind mitigates the tendency in macro judgements to totalize history and omit its anomalies. The revolt contains with examples of what microhistorian Eduardo Grendi's referred to as the "exceptional-normal": the notion exploration of exceptional primary documents and/or events, however minute, unearths information about the historical context overlooked.⁴³ When historians and the authors of sources struggle to understand the events or behaviours they encounter, there is a propensity for discovering information about the past because it prompts probing questions about the culture and social life of historical subjects.⁴⁴ What may seem exceptional to certain contemporaries of the period or modern observers, could be a typical cultural practice or feature of society that provides a window into in past.

Francisco Sopó's decision to aide the escape of the plantation manager and reveal the plot to kill the whites is a prime example. Initially, the slave leader recruited others to exact revenge on the whites, using his position in the slave hierarchy to parlay with former black auxiliary slaves.⁴⁵ Sopó's sudden change of heart, however, perplexed contemporaries and his accusers, the colonial officials who executed him.⁴⁶ Where primary and secondary sources wrestle with anomalies, there is opportunity to investigate Sopó's motivations, and how they were born out of his social role in Boca Nigua's slave hierarchy. For Sopó, it is unlikely he considered his decision to abandon the slave revolt odd or foolish; his previous actions, in fact, are quite

methodical and rational (explained in Ch. 4). It is more conceivable that the structure of the plantation, which placed pressures on creole slaves to choose their loyalty between their fellow slaves and whites, compelled Sopó to decide whether to go forth with the plot based on numerous factors (i.e. the likelihood of a successful outcome).

Grendi's 'exceptional-normal' concept dovetails with microhistory's stress on human agency. The disparate group of Italian historians in the 1970s associated with 'microhistoria' rejected what they deemed deterministic and teleological approaches to history (i.e. modernization theory).⁴⁷ Instead, microhistorians seek to accentuate the decision-making power of historical actors, treating them as conscious subjects. I underscored agency in this paper by highlighting the differentiation within slave and elite social groups subject to similar conditions. Both Ana María and Francisco Sopó were creole slaves who held higher work positions, and both were close to the manager of Boca Nigua, Juan Oyarsabal. Yet, up close we see Ana María and Francisco Sopó responded differently to doubts they had about carrying out the revolt. The former stayed the course, pursuing revolt and was celebrated queen of the rebels, whereas the latter never fully committed to violent confrontation, aligning himself, in the eyes of the slaves, with the whites.

This point of difference reflects the importance of Ana María's agency and raises questions about the role of gender. As we saw in chapter four, women were not spared the brutal punishments males received. It is likely Ana María embraced the revolt because of the different 'stakes in accommodation and in resistance'; unlike Sopó, she made it clear revolt was the viable option.⁴⁸ It is reasonable to assume where Sopó saw accommodation as a possibility, Ana María's social position on the plantation as female domestic slave would come with added burdens. We can get a glimpse of her role as a powerful distributor of resources to the slaves of

Boca Nigua during the revolt (i.e. she circulated clothes, butter, wine, and gunpowder).⁴⁹

A micro-oriented approach shows the differentiation of opinion among elites as to how the suppression of the uprising was handled. Archbishop Fernando Portillo y Torres did not spare judge Manuel Bravo from criticism concerning his approach to Boca Nigua. The archbishop accused Bravo of essentially exploiting his role in the affair as an act of self-aggrandizement, which distracted, noted Portillo y Torres, from more important matters: the root causes of the revolt.⁵⁰ Portillo y Torres's critique goes so far as to label Bravo's conduct tantamount to deceiving the Spanish crown.⁵¹ The big demonstration of force Bravo was responsible, according to the Archbishop, for sending a message to the local population but was unnecessary. The differences of opinion available to the microscopic lens reveals the response to the Boca Nigua revolt exhibits the agency of those in power.

The agency of colonial officials is also apparent in the precautionary measures taken by the governor of Santo Domingo during the execution of the Boca Nigua rebel leaders. The governor ordered a heavy military presence (i.e. over one hundred grenadiers) to stay on alert for radical slaves and free men of colour in attendance who might challenge Spanish colonial power.⁵² The governor's choices reflect how seriously he took the capabilities of black revolutionaries and the threat they posed. These decisions come to the fore when considering the small site of investigation that makes agency more palpable but also utilizes the reduced scale to contextualize events occurring on a macro level.

Creolization in this study is shown to be informed by social structures (e.g. capital from the metropole, slavery as a system of labour, and the plantation as the modular production site) and personal choices. Though skeptical of grand narratives, microhistorians for the most part are unwilling to reject the connection between small spaces and history's larger questions. The role

of wider socio-economic and historical processes (i.e. creolization) are not rejected; they are brought to life through the small scale. Theory acts as a guide for where to look and what to look for. It is validated or qualified based on the exploration of a social setting populated by conscious actors.⁵³

The micro-macro link is contentious in microhistory. Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, for instance, encourages microhistorians to incorporate poststructuralist ideas to avoid imposing theoretical pretensions into renderings of the past; however, his concept of solely examining history's fragments rejects macro developments altogether.⁵⁴ My study disputes the merits of this type of microhistory. Without including the link between the macro and micro it is difficult to produce history that is not fragmentary or trivial. Both perspectives are both vital for recognizing creolization is a historically significant process that touched numerous individuals' lives. Without contextualizing the social structures—showing the social position of creole slaves and/or the relationship between the colonial government and the local elite population—the Boca Nigua revolt is little more than violent blip in Dominican history. The Boca Nigua revolt is better understood when the micro lens is linked to macro developments.⁵⁵

Santo Domingo in the 'Unfortunate Era'

The context in which the Boca Nigua revolt erupted, the 'unfortunate era,' is an indispensable component of my research. During the eighteenth century, colonial populations in the region were affected by the emergence of independence wars and revolutions (e.g. the American Revolution and the Haitian Revolution). Prompted by these events, creoles in the Caribbean began reconsidering their political autonomy and relationships with their respective metropolises. I examined the importance of the 1790s for the creolization of Santo Domingo by comparing the colony's early historical development with changes in its social landscape that occurred during

the eighteenth century.

Revolution in St. Domingue (i.e. the Haitian Revolution) disrupted the reintroduction of plantation slavery in Santo Domingo—an objective that defined the birth of a creole consciousness among members of the colony's urban elite. The revolution initiated by slaves in the northern plains of St. Domingue bore immense consequences for Caribbean colonies, but the geographic proximity of Santo Domingo assured its revolutionary influence. The Haitian Revolution forever changed relations between the Hispanic, primarily mixed-race and free population in the east, and the French governed slave colony of St. Domingue. Their preceding trade ties were interrupted as the slave revolution upturned Hispanic creole elites' initiative to transform economic production in Santo Domingo to the sugar plantation model.⁵⁶ After Spain lost to France in war, the former ceded Santo Domingo to France in accordance with the Treaty of Basel. This enabled French colonial authorities in St. Domingue to declare abolition throughout Hispaniola, restricting emigrating whites from Santo Domingo to claim slaves as property.⁵⁷ I showed these developments exacerbated creolization and contributed to a turbulent environment that informed the thinking of the slaves and elites involved in the Boca Nigua revolt.

Santo Domingo was the first Spanish colony founded in New World. The importation of African slaves to work on sugar plantations began in the sixteenth century but was not sustainable due to the lack of royal support.⁵⁸ The decline of the plantation and the colony's depopulation gave rise to an autonomous free 'proto-peasantry' and more paternalistic form of slavery practiced on cattle ranches.⁵⁹ Historians consider this an exceptional feature of Dominican history; its creolization and early nationalism.⁶⁰ While this is true, I stressed the eighteenth century brought changes (i.e. population and economic growth) that altered Santo

Domingo's society. I argued the autonomy of the rural population and the social and spatial distance between the population was decreasing. The creole project to reintroduce slavery and Hispanicize the people on the periphery of colonial reach (i.e. maroons); the eruption of the Haitian Revolution and subsequent war with France; and the Treaty of Basel brought Santo Domingo's heterogeneous peoples into greater interaction.

Distance between members of society became increasingly undermined when Santo Domingo and St. Domingue engaged in heightened trade during the eighteenth century.⁶¹ The Spanish-dominated side of Hispaniola's cattle supplied the growth of settlers and slaves in St. Domingue.⁶² Trade spurred the founding of new sugar plantations outside the city.⁶³ Juan Batista Oyarzabal, who managed the Boca Nigua refinery in his uncle's stead, was granted permission by the Spanish Crown to import hundreds of African slaves.⁶⁴ Boca Nigua's status as the largest and most productive of Santo Domingo's sugar mills signified its importance in the elite creole project to expand plantation slavery during the eighteenth century.

Creolization from above in Santo Domingo, the change in political consciousness among elites in the Caribbean described by Benedict Anderson in Ch.2, can be traced back to the mid-to-late eighteenth century.⁶⁵ Antonio Sánchez Valverde, considered the defining voice of elite creoles, took critical aim at the Spanish metropole for neglecting Santo Domingo, especially investments in the slave trade.⁶⁶ Valverde maintained slavery is not only a moral and spiritual principle, but the key to Santo Domingo's future prosperity—St. Domingue provided the roadmap for the riches accrued through plantation slavery.⁶⁷ Valverde's work typifies colonial elites' agenda to Hispanicize the colony: return the storied territory back to its former glory.⁶⁸

Far from the bloody independence wars fought from the shores of St. Domingue to the continental Americas, Santo Domingo's elites and their relationship with the metropole was

roundly criticized by creoles for inefficiencies, but they were highly dependent on Spain for economic assistance. Before Valverde's work had been published in Madrid in 1785, creole elites in Santo Domingo received numerous concessions regarding metropolitan control of the slave trade (i.e. tax policies incentivized investments in non-domestic slaves put to work in agriculture).⁶⁹ The creole identity fashioned during the mid-to-late eighteenth century was based on a project to develop plantation slavery, preserve the traditional order, and further racialize society.

Rejuvenation of plantation labour hybridized Santo Domingo's practice of slavery—newly established plantations around the city coexisted with the paternalism of the cattle ranches and the social mobility found in burgeoning tobacco cultivation.⁷⁰ Santo Domingo is unique insofar as the cattle ranches were more prevalent, but slavery was not unlike other Caribbean plantation when it came to sugar production. Contemporaries familiar with Caribbean plantation slavery, namely, Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, wrote about the similarities between the plantation in the western Hispaniola and those around the city of Santo Domingo.⁷¹

Marked political instability arrived in the 1790s on the island thwarted elite plans for plantation development, the overarching political and economic objectives of elite creoles. The Haitian Revolution posed a serious threat to the project of elite creolization and Hispanicization. Colonial officials' support for this course of development was evident in their willingness to offer financial and other resources to black auxiliary troops fighting French forces.⁷² The gamble failed due to French commissioners outlawing slavery in St. Domingue, yet it offers insight into the effort on the part of colonial officials to safeguard the colony's commitment to the importation of slaves to work in sugar production.

The Treaty of Basel stoked fears about the resiliency of the elite creole project as the

relationship between colony and metropole soured over the cession of Santo Domingo to revolutionary France. Reaction to the news was met with extreme hostility amongst Santo Domingo's remaining elite population. Archbishop Portillo y Torres noted the anger was so intense it could have very well turned into a rebellion.⁷³ The departure of Spain from Santo Domingo raised the concerns amongst the Hispanic population of Hispaniola: that their cultural differences with the French would invite persecution by their new rulers.⁷⁴ Landowners and local aldermen, in particular, were infuriated by the cession.⁷⁵ One of the crucial findings in this research is the revelation that blame for the outcome of the Treaty of Basel was placed on the colonial representatives of the king (i.e. Audiencia court judges and the colonial governor), not the monarchy.⁷⁶ Slave-owning elites felt the ineffective management of Santo Domingo's affairs displeased the Crown, which prompted the king's abandonment.⁷⁷

Slave Revolt at Boca Nigua

I focused narrowly on the causes of the Boca Nigua revolt, the ensuing battle between Spanish military forces and slave combatants, and the juridical process that followed conflict in chapter 4. Microhistorical investigation showed creolization was a palpable reality for the instigators of the revolt and their adversaries. The violent conflict at Boca Nigua emerged out of the relationships among slaves within the confines of the plantation. Sopó's social position not only spurred his desire to exact revenge on the whites but aided its possibility. Primary sources acknowledged his anger over the deaths of two young slaves, yet anger alone did not set the revolt in motion.⁷⁸ Rather, it was Sopó's "ascendancy over other Blacks" that truly made him dangerous; he was in a position of power.⁷⁹ Governor Garcia y Moreno noted that proof of Sopó's influence can be found in the fact that the slaves of Boca Nigua were reportedly compliant before Sopó persuaded them to rebel.⁸⁰

The slaves trusted Sopó and expressed concerns to him about their basic needs, including their rejection of the slave life.⁸¹ Francisco Sopó's personal connection and responsibility as slave driver motivated him to plot the uprising. His role in the hierarchy of slaves aided the plan for revenge against the whites. Sopó sought out revolutionary fighters considered kin for instruction on carrying out a successful uprising. His status on the plantation provided freedom to carry out clandestine activities and the changing political landscape of the 1790s presented greater opportunities for revolt. To build trust with the auxiliaries Sopó and his roommate Antonio Carretero gave the former revolutionary fighters gifts (i.e. liquor), delivered under the auspices of work duties.⁸² The socio-historical process of creolization created possibilities for the slave leaders of the revolt; however, as I demonstrated earlier, they forged their own destinies.

The official colonial government's reaction to the revolt was also shaped by creolization. Authorities acted quickly to quell the revolt, and they put considerable resources into ensuring the slaves were apprehended and publicly punished. Authorities were concerned the Boca Nigua rebels would spread revolution through the capital city of Santo Domingo, not unlike the slaves in St. Domingue.⁸³ The same colonial authorities under scrutiny in the wake of the Treaty of Basel in 1795 were charged with responding to the Boca Nigua revolt the following year. Their coordinated suppression of the plantation slaves was influenced by the contentious political milieu of the 1790s. Colonial officials were preoccupied with assuring the free local population stability had not been lost when they orchestrated the apprehension and castigation of the rebel offenders. I argued the Boca Nigua affair was used as an "escarmiento" (warning, lesson or example) intended for slaves to demonstrate the consequences of resistance.⁸⁴ The colonial elites response to the events was also intended to reassure those who feared the incoming French

government and distrusted the outgoing Spanish representatives.

Creolization and the Dominican Nation

Microhistory uses the small scale to answer big, consequential questions. Since the socio-historical process and period under observation are connected to the birth of nationalism in Latin America and the Caribbean, the research presented here offers insight beyond creolization of Santo Domingo. Occurring when imperial loyalties in the Caribbean were being redrawn, the Boca Nigua revolt bears ideas about the origins of the Dominican nation. Benedict Anderson's ideas were explored here to elucidate the creolization of elites, yet he makes a causal connection between creoles' pursuit of independence during the late eighteenth century and nationalism.⁸⁵ *Imagined Communities* situates the formation of national development in a historic period when the meaning of creole was being re-created to signify a self-conscious valorization of their colonial homelands. Creole elites in Latin America adopted terms like "Americanos" to rally socially divided societies to war with empire.⁸⁶ Criticism of Anderson's theory is not unwarranted—scholars conceive Latin American nation-building occurred in earnest after 1850 in conjunction with modern state-building projects.⁸⁷ However, his work makes explicit creolization in the late eighteenth century is connected to the formation national development in the Americas.

In "'Tragedy and Glory' in the 'Unfortunate Era,'" I focused on the historical social context of the 1790s that preceded the appearance of modern nation states. The Dominican Republic did not appear overnight: its national identity was conceived in "fits and starts" through successive attempts at nation building.⁸⁸ Whereas Latin American republics took shape through wars of decolonization against Spain, the Dominican Republic would forge its independence first from Haiti in the 1840s and then later again in the 1860s with the War of Restoration against Spain.

Exploring the creolization of Santo Domingo by focusing attention on the Boca Nigua revolt allows a view into the colony's past social relationships that were drawn from to form the Dominican Republic. I remain concerned with what Hobsbawm referred to as "proto-national" social attachments—the shared sense of identity from which modern nations originated.⁸⁹ Prior to the existence of the Dominican Republic, feelings of affection for the homeland were developing historically and share qualities with nationalism (i.e. group identification based on territory claim), despite the lack of a centralized national state subsidiary institutions. For example, Archbishop Torres noted when news of the Treaty of Basel reached the denizens of the city of Santo Domingo, a woman exclaimed, "Isla mia, Patria mia (my island, my homeland)," before collapsing to her death.⁹⁰

Anderson's notion of "imagined communities," subjective connections based on a common identity, underscores the boundaries to national imaginings—for a nation to exist it must be imagined separately from another nation.⁹¹ How these divisions emerged on the island of Hispaniola is a question involving the histories of two nations—Haiti in the west and the Dominican Republic in the east. Contrary to the strict modernist periodization of the nation, in which modernity is the fountainhead for all things national, exploring the 1790s through the Boca Nigua revolt shows how various members of the population of Santo Domingo related to their neighbours. The slave-owning landowners who remained continued a new chapter in Antonio Sánchez Valverde's lament of the plight of the Hispanic creoles of Santo Domingo; this time, however, Haiti bore the brunt of the blame.

Following the Treaty of Basel, Santo Domingo was militarily seized by Toussaint Louverture in 1801; the newly-minted republic of Haiti attempted to amalgamate the Spanish east in 1805, before the two territories were formally joined from 1822 to 1844.⁹² The late eighteenth century

marks the onset of the Haiti's dominion over Hispaniola. Yet, the policies of the Haitian government (mainly the acquisition of property and abolition of land titles), especially in the 1830s united peasant and elite opposition in the east.⁹³ The dissolution of the political union between east and west Hispaniola in 1844 brought renewed conflict on the island, precipitating a power struggle between caudillos (strongmen) and the attempted recolonization by Spain in 1861.⁹⁴ The War of Restoration (1863-1865) removed the Spanish presence, and in the late nineteenth century the now Dominican Republic underwent rapid economic and political modernization, particularly in sugar manufacturing.⁹⁵ When debt skyrocketed and political instability returned in the early 1900s, the United States took control of the Dominican customhouses in 1905 as per the Roosevelt administration's policy of using force to ensure its hegemonic status in the region.⁹⁶ From 1916 to 1924 the US militarily occupied the Dominican Republic to impose order and the maintenance of a debt repayment schedule.⁹⁷ The occupation resulted in the professionalization of the Dominican military by the US and the rise of one of the most notorious dictators in Caribbean history, Rafael Leónidas Trujillo (1891-1961).⁹⁸

The Trujillo regime (1930-1961) did not necessarily invent traditions insofar as attitudes toward Haitians already existed and were contested over the years.⁹⁹ It is more appropriate to say the Trujillo dictatorship seized upon a specific reading of the 1790s that echoed elite concerns in the 'unfortunate era' (e.g. slave emancipation, revolutionary activities, and fear over the dominance of the west).¹⁰⁰ Intellectuals in the twentieth century considered founding fathers of Dominican nationalist thought (Manuel Arturo Peña Batlle and Joaquín Balaguer) looked to late eighteenth century as the beginning of domination by Haiti and the need for security.¹⁰¹ Thus, the historical rendering is invented; intellectuals appropriated historical events to construct a national history whereby the underdevelopment and political instability was brought on by

Haitians and the qualities that defined their society (a history of slavery, revolution and African racial heritage).¹⁰² Twentieth century nationalist thinkers appropriated the past to distinguish the Dominican people as distinct from their western neighbours, exaggerating the Spanish imprint of Catholic religion, mixed racial lineage (closer to whiteness), and the Spanish language.¹⁰³ Framed as a pitched battle between two completely opposite societies, the Trujillo regime unleashed violence of genocidal proportions to ingrain national difference in Dominican people.¹⁰⁴ Members of Trujillo's intelligentsia justified using the state to police the boundaries between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.¹⁰⁵

While the discontent and fear among elites in the 'unfortunate era' was certainly real, it is incumbent on historians to delve deeper into the period to identify discontinuities and continuities between the instability of the 1790s and Trujillo's national-building project of the twentieth century. For one, conceptions of race changed during this time from being culturally to biologically-based.¹⁰⁶ With the modernization of the state, race took on new connotations as the decisive criterion by which the model citizen in the nation was measured and inducted into the community.¹⁰⁷ Being "constitutionally white" does not necessarily strictly correspond with skin colour so much as it does with cultural distance from blackness and the legacy of Africanness.¹⁰⁸ During the Boca Nigua revolt, it is the habits, customs and attitudes of slaves that signify their proximity to blackness. Tomás Congo, was an itinerant slave whose "terrible customs" were strikingly different than Francisco Sopó, who was deemed a cunningly military captain.¹⁰⁹ Sopó's downfall was based on his perplexing decision to plot against his master, an act the Archbishop believed stemmed from his black heritage.¹¹⁰

Looking closer at the antecedents to twentieth century nationalism, we see the elite narrative that the successive attempts to integrate of Santo Domingo into the west (beginning 1795)

spelled tragedy for the colony was not necessarily well-received by slaves.¹¹¹ Microhistory of the Boca Nigua revolt a year later shows slaves saw opportunity the political tumult resulting from the Haitian Revolution and the Treaty of Basel. Francisco Sopó and Antonio Carretero, discussed earlier, attempted to capitalize on their kin's fighting knowledge, made possible due to the revolutionary period. Santo Domingo's slaves had less reason to fear incorporation into an abolitionist territory. When Toussaint Louverture marched into Santo Domingo in 1801, 15,000 slaves were immediately freed.¹¹² Thus, the dominant nationalist ideology perpetuated by the Trujillo dictatorship is unmasked through evaluating the historical period elites use to imagine the nation.

Prospective Avenues of Research

National identity is a powerful force in the lives of Dominicans today. A recent ethnographic study argues national identity in the Dominican Republic is informed by conceptions of Dominican cultural difference so deeply entrenched they affect the social cues, mannerisms and pronunciation of the population.¹¹³ What are the historical origins of these lasting effects tied to conceptions of the national community? How have they change over time? What are the continuities and discontinuities between the late eighteenth century creolization of Santo Domingo and contemporary Dominican nationalism? These are a sample of questions that arise out of the findings presented in this thesis. In conclusion, I briefly highlight areas of critical discussion and future research.

Contemporary scholarship places national formation following 1870—especially dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo's brand of modernization (1930-1961). However, as I showed, more analysis is needed to explain the transformation from creolization to nationalism, premodern to modern. Like Eugenio Matibag, Alan Cambeira, and Lauren Derby I adopted a periodization of

the nation that extends back to the eighteenth century. However, where they favoured macro conceptions of the history of national formation, I accentuated the voices of individuals of the period on a micro scale.¹¹⁴ A fruitful path of future inquiry ought to describe this change, but also how individuals within various social classes experienced them. Consider how historical interpretation of the 1790s is altered when the focus becomes sugar plantations as opposed to cattle ranches. Derby emphasizes the prevalence of latter and the practice of a milder form of slavery shaping early Dominican creolization and early nationalism. Yet, focusing on the minor sugar industry demonstrates slaves were willing to reject their oppressive conditions and slavery.

A historical study that utilizes micro and macro perspectives has the potential to reframe ideas about the perennial discord between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Matibag's work suggests there is a rich past of collaboration between east and west, and in this research project we saw slaves reach out to and emulate the practices of slaves in St. Domingue. More microhistories are required to examine the complexities of these exchanges, the meaning they possessed for the parties involved, and the social, political and cultural implications. This is crucial because how Dominicans define themselves in relation to their western neighbours has become the focal point of recent literature on Dominican national identity. Unfortunately, changing conceptions of race and racialization from the 1790s to the twentieth century are often ignored without connecting the relevance of the present to the past. Ironically, just as historians with a virulently racist agenda working under Trujillo failed to contextualize the past in conjunction with the present, those that argue Dominican nationalism is inherently racist failed to grasp the dynamic nature of race.¹¹⁵

To expand the growing literature on Dominican nationalism and its expressions (national identity, consciousness and community) further exploration of those voices that remain murky

under the microscope is needed. Due to a lack of documentary evidence, the individual stories of the creole landowners and slaves are told through colonial officials. Expanding on these viewpoints through alternative methodologies or locating primary sources would further elucidate the ‘unfortunate era.’ The same is true for the montero population who assisted the Crown. How this group operated on the margins and began interacting with the colonial governments is a fascinating development worth demystifying in the context of national identity formation. If one is inclined to believe past social relationships provide the material for future nations, the interactions between eastern and western Hispaniola; Spanish colony and metropole; master and slave during the 1790s provide an ideal starting point for assessing how an early Dominican identity was forged.

Another worthwhile area of research raised in this thesis is the lives of slave women working on plantations in Santo Domingo. In the case of the Boca Nigua revolt, women played a significant role in orchestrating the revolt. Despite the added hardships that existed for women in the Caribbean slavery, Ana María’s arose to the status of ‘queen’ amongst her fellow slaves—her active leadership facilitated access to resources and their distribution. Other women (Feliciana, Francisca Ana Marcela, Maria Mora, and Antonia) also played a formative part of the revolt by barricading the plantation’s central building.¹¹⁶ “Tragedy and Glory” in the “Unfortunate Era” scratches the surface of the experiences of female slaves, a topic that demands further attention. However, it is notable the scope of micro-oriented historical research was able to capture women on the plantation as active agents of change. When viewed in conjunction with macro historical perspectives on women in the region, the micro offers a case study for comparative analysis. While the women of Boca Nigua’s participation in the unrest may not be applicable to other women in Santo Domingo or the West Indians, it offers data that can

supplement further studies. In this way, a series of microhistories might form a more complete picture of the realities facing slave women of Santo Domingo in the 1790s. The micro-macro connection is indispensable when it comes to the subject since a microscope alone does not explain the broader socio-historical context for women surviving the bondage of slavery in the Caribbean. Therefore, what is needed are more microhistories to outline the similarities and dissimilarities for female slaves in Santo Domingo from the period. Nevertheless, the findings presented here are intended to spark future discussions about the possibilities and limitations of microhistory in recovering voices from the past ignored in their own time.

Notes

¹ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 46.

² Chaudenson, 95-96.

³ The sugar revolution lasted from the mid-seventeenth to late eighteenth century. Higman "Sugar Revolution," 215.

⁴ At the tail end of the sugar revolution, both British Jamaica and French St. Domingue were composed of approximately ninety percent black slaves. Garrigus, 51.

⁵ Mintz, "Hispanic Exceptionalism,"

⁶ Palmié, Stephan. "The 'C-Word' Again," 68.

⁷ Palmié, "Creolization and its Discontents," 438.

⁸ Stewart, 7.

⁹ Chaudenson, 119.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹² *Ibid.*, 74.

¹³ Brathwaite, 298.

¹⁴ James, 19.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Bjørn Thomassen, *Liminality and the Modern: Living through the In-between* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 1-2.

¹⁷ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 77.

¹⁸ Mintz, "Hispanic Exceptionalism," 260.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 261-262.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 260.

²² Mintz, "Enduring Substances," 301.

²³ Giusti-Cordero, 70.

²⁴ Bravo, digital image 20.

²⁵ Bush, 33.

²⁶ Mintz "Hispanic Exceptionalism," 258-259.

²⁷ Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 12.

²⁸ Ibid., 32.

²⁹ Ibid., 18.

³⁰ Mintz, “Enduring Substances,” 302.

³¹ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda Boca-Nigua*, digital image 8.

³² Bravo, digital image 10.

³³ The shock soldiers expressed indicates their unfamiliarity, and none of the sources acknowledge any specific ethnic or cultural background.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Fernando Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 21.

³⁶ Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*, 91.

³⁷ Sziujártó, 5.

³⁸ Ibid., 20.

³⁹ Kracauer, 130.

⁴⁰ Brewer, 89.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² I am referring to a more rigid reading of Marx’s historical materialism, not the micro-oriented work of E.P. Thompson. See ch.2 of this thesis for distinction.

⁴³ Ginzburg, Tedeschi and Anne C. Tedeschi, 33.

⁴⁴ Vivo, 391.

⁴⁵ Geggus, “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s,” 142.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 144.

⁴⁷ Ginzburg, “Microhistory: Two or Three Things that I Know about it,” 21.

⁴⁸ See Bush.

⁴⁹ Bravo, digital image 25.

⁵⁰ Fernando Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 19.

⁵¹ Ibid., image 17.

⁵² García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda Boca-Nigua*, digital image 11.

⁵³ Sziujártó, 74-75.

⁵⁴ See Magnússon, ““The Singularization of History.””

⁵⁵ Vivo, 391.

⁵⁶ Cassá, 388-389.

⁵⁷ Johnson, 59.

⁵⁸ Turits, 28.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 67.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 49; Derby, “National Identity and the Idea of Value,” 8.

⁶¹ Pons, 89.

⁶² Franco, 56.

⁶³ Pons, 87.

⁶⁴ Jones, 47-48.

⁶⁵ Cassá, 388-389.

⁶⁶ San Miguel, 9.

⁶⁷ Valverde, 154.

⁶⁸ San Miguel, 10.

⁶⁹ Franco, 55.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 112.

⁷¹ Fumagalli, 36; Cambeira, 116.

⁷² Geggus, “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s,” 140.

⁷³ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre cesión de la isla a franceses*, digital image 2.

⁷⁴ Ibid., digital images 2-3.

⁷⁵ Ibid., digital image 3.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda Boca-Nigua*, digital image 6.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 19.

⁸² Bravo, digital image 20.

⁸³ García y Moreno, *Sublevación de negros de la Hacienda Boca-Nigua*, digital image 6.

⁸⁴Ibid.; Hidalgo, digital images 1-2.

⁸⁵ Anderson, 47.

⁸⁶ Chasteen, *Americanos: Latin America's Struggle for Independence*, 2.

⁸⁷ Chasteen, "Introduction: Beyond Imagined Communities," XVIII.

⁸⁸ Knight, *The Caribbean, The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 139.

⁸⁹ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 46-47.

⁹⁰ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre cesión de la isla a franceses*, digital image 1.

⁹¹ Anderson, 7.

⁹² Johnson, 57.

⁹³ Turits, 46.

⁹⁴ See Miguel Ángel Monclús, "Pedro Santana," in *The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, Eric Paul Roorda, Lauren H. Derby and Raymundo González, eds. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 143.

⁹⁵ Martínez-Vergne's excellent work covers this period.

⁹⁶ Emiliano Tejera, "Uneasiness about the US Government," in *The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, Eric Paul Roorda, Lauren H. Derby and Raymundo González, eds. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 235; Vanden and Gary Prevost, 54.

⁹⁷ See Bruce J. Calder, *The Impact of Intervention: The Dominican Republic during the US Occupation of 1916-1924* (Princeton, NJ: Wiener Publishers, 1984).

⁹⁸ Eric Paul Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door: The Good Neighbour Policy and the Trujillo Regime in the Dominican Republic, 1930-1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 19-21.

⁹⁹ Matibag, 8.

¹⁰⁰ San Miguel, 25.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 26.

¹⁰⁴ Turits, "A World Destroyed," 594.

¹⁰⁵ San Miguel, 25.

¹⁰⁶ Bauer, 39.

¹⁰⁷ Palmié, "Creolization and its Discontents," 438-439.

¹⁰⁸ Bauer, 37.

¹⁰⁹ Bravo, digital image 10.

¹¹⁰ Portillo y Torres, *Arzobispo Santo Domingo sobre evacuación de la Isla*, digital image 20.

¹¹¹ Johnson,

¹¹² Matibag, 73.

¹¹³ Yadira Hazel Perez, "Sensing difference: Whiteness, National identity, and Belonging in the Dominican Republic," *Transforming Anthropology* 22, no. 2 (2014): 78-91, doi: 10.1111/traa.12033.

¹¹⁴ Matibag, 8; Cambeira, 136-14.

¹¹⁵ Howard, 5; Baud, "Race and Nation in the Dominican Republic," 314; Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic," 15.

¹¹⁶ Hidalgo, digital image 10.

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